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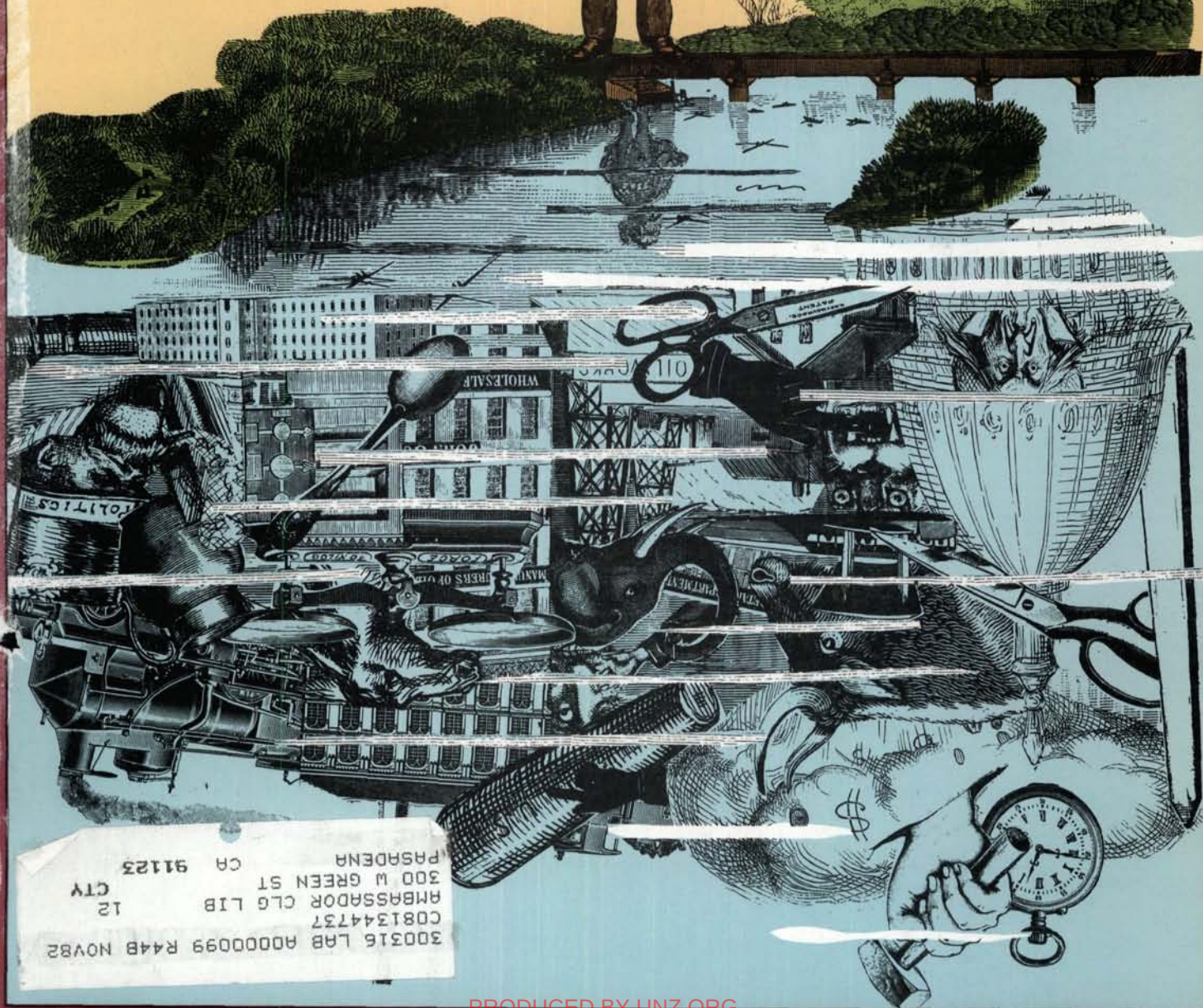
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THE EDUCATION OF DAVID STOCKMAN

BY WILLIAM GREIDER

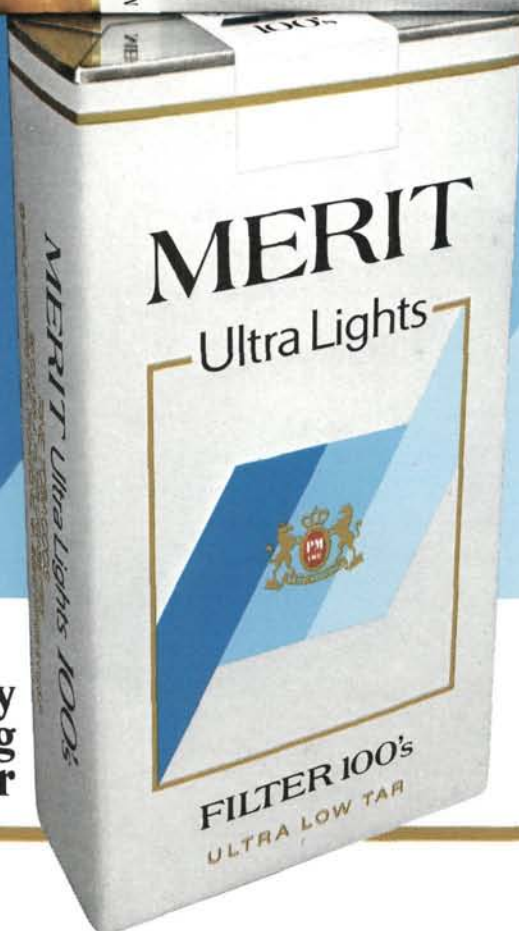
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The Administration's proposals were advanced in the name of cutting the federal budget, when, in fact, they would not have reduced the federal budget.

The proposals were inflationary because they would have forced rural electric cooperatives to pay higher interest rates for borrowed capital. And they would have imposed inflated electric bills on millions of rural Americans who already pay an average of 12% more for electricity than their urban neighbors.

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Now, there are indications that the Administration is renewing its efforts to undo the rural electrification program—with seeming disregard for the strong showing of Congressional will.

To rural Americans, tampering with success just doesn't make sense.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE KINGDOM OF AUSCHWITZ

The Central Intelligence Agency would like to correct a passage in "The Kingdom of Auschwitz" by Otto Friedrich (September *Atlantic*): "On April 4, 1944, U.S. reconnaissance planes flying over Auschwitz took some remarkably clear photographs (hidden in the CIA archives until 1979) that show all the essential evidence—the gas chambers and crematoria, the prisoners standing in line—yet even the experts trained to interpret such photographic evidence apparently saw nothing but a large prison camp."

The aerial photography of Auschwitz was never hidden in CIA archives. It was, following declassification by the Department of Defense, stored in the Federal Records Center of the National Archives in Suitland, Maryland. Under the administrative control of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the film was available to any accredited researchers, public or private, but remained unused on archive shelves for many years. The scenes described in the Friedrich article were discovered by two CIA analysts, Dino A. Brugioni and Robert G. Poirier, reviewing the archive originals in 1978. These analysts authored a monograph entitled *The Holocaust Revisited: A Retrospective Analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Complex*, which the CIA made available to the National Archives, the press, and the public. It is still available from the Library of Congress and the National Technical Information Service. The monograph reveals that the I.G. Farber "Buna" synthetic fuel plant at Monowice—not Auschwitz-Birkenau—was the reconnaissance target of the photography, which explains why photo interpreters paid little attention to the camp at the time.

LAVON B. STRONG

Chief, Public Affairs Branch, CIA

Washington, D.C.

In an otherwise accurate description, Otto Friedrich omits to mention that at the Auschwitz camp, which the Poles call "The Museum," there is a hotel, a coffee shop and a restaurant, and gift

shops selling postcards, trinkets, books, and pennants bearing the word "Auschwitz" or "Oświęcim" (the Polish name for Auschwitz). Tour buses bring large groups for visits and outings, and I am told that picnics are a normal occurrence. All of this is a ghoulis desecration of the memory of those tortured and exterminated there.

In contrast, Birkenau (in Polish, Brzezinka, sometimes referred to as "Auschwitz II"), about three kilometers from Auschwitz, where most of the gas chambers were located, was left substantially the way the Germans abandoned it in 1945. Signs identify the crematoria and pits where masses of bodies were burned, and an international monument declares in eighteen languages that 4 million people were liquidated by the Nazis there. Birkenau is eerie, grim, and empty, in contrast to Auschwitz, which is touristy and, one might even say, festive.

At neither site is there any recognition that of the 4 million victims, 3 million were Jews, or that all of the children gassed and incinerated there were Jewish. Auschwitz-Birkenau was intended by the Nazis to be the key death factory in their "Final Solution of the Jewish Question." Yet the only indication I saw that Jews were killed was in Block 27 in Auschwitz, which contained a meager and dilapidated exhibit of photographs. Apparently films were also to be presented, but none of the mechanical equipment and few of the lights worked. Even at that, I gather that this exhibit was installed in response to protests that since other "nations" were commemorated, some mention ought to be made of the Jews.

BURTON CAINE

Philadelphia, Penn.

"A GORGEOUS 'NA' MELODY"

Mary Jo Salter's essay "A Gorgeous 'Na' Melody" (October *Atlantic*) is informative but lacking in historical perspective. When Salter states that many Japanese are interested in English but few learn it well, she is quite right. But when she discusses the

Some insist coal is good. Some insist coal is bad.

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Those who insist that coal is good point out that we have over 200 billion tons of economically recoverable coal in this country—enough to last us for at least three centuries at current consumption rates.

And, they further point out, although that represents 90% of

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It's true, that with greater usage, coal could give us as much as one half of the new energy we'll need between now and the year 2000—enough to help loosen the dangerous ties that bind us to expensive and insecure foreign oil.

But those who insist that coal is bad point to abandoned mines which scar the landscape

and allow acid water to seep into streams.

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Japanese practice of borrowing words from English, she is on shakier ground.

All languages borrow from other languages. As borrowed words become "naturalized," they are almost invariably altered to conform to the phonological and orthographical structure of the borrowing language; their meaning may become more general, more specific, or simply different from the original. Salter is correct when she says that such loan words can never be returned, but why should they be? "Waishatsu" and "sarariman" are not corrupt English words but perfectly good Japanese ones that happen to have English etymologies.

RICHARD F. BOURS
Cambridge, Mass.

When a Japanese "magazine for working women" named *Travail* recently asked to buy rights to an article I had written, I wondered why they used "travail" as the magazine's title. It invoked so unpleasant an image. Only after I puzzled over it for a while did I surmise they had probably used their Japanese-English dictionary to look up synonyms for "working woman," "laboring woman." And there under "labor" they had found the synonym for labor as in giving birth—travail.

SHIRLEY SLOAN FADER
Paramus, N.J.

Mary Jo Salter wonders why a major Japanese corporation does not see fit to have its booklet checked by a competent English-speaking proofreader for obvious mistakes and concludes that the translator's "face" and the desire for uniformity lead the unc cosmopolitan Japanese away from fluency in the English language.

A few pages later, however, Robert A. Caro, in his otherwise excellent article on LBJ, repeatedly refers to Mr. Johnson's *embrazos* with San Antonio residents. Unnoticed by the author, the publisher, or your staff is the fact that *embrazo* in Spanish means "to pass the left arm through the handle of [a shield]"; the word Mr. Caro certainly intended was *abrazo*, that is, to embrace or hug.

Neither face nor unc cosmopolitan uniformity precluded the correct spelling of *rebozo*, the only other Spanish word in the article. But it is apparent to any Spanish-speaker upon reading the

American press that it is not only in Japan that proofreaders seem to enjoy lifetime employment.

JAIME A. ALCABES
Lima, Peru

ADVICE & CONSENT

John Weiner's criticism of Mavis Gallant's quotation from Raynaud (Letters to the Editor, October *Atlantic*) points up the labyrinthine difficulties inherent in translation. Mr. Weiner translates "*J'suis pas un imbécile puisque je suis douanier*" as "I'm not an imbecile since I am a customs officer." The quote would be more comprehensible if the word sequence were changed: "Since I am not an imbecile, I am a customs officer." A more exact translation of "*puisque*" is "it follows that": "I am not an imbecile: It follows that I am a customs officer." "Therefore" would also be an acceptable translation: "I am not an imbecile, therefore I am a customs officer." But if we translate "*puisque*" as "because," we will draw the same laugh from an English-speaking audience that Raynaud expected from his French one: "I am not an imbecile because I am a customs officer."

JAMES FANNING
New Canaan, Conn.

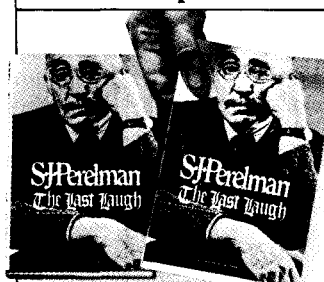
Andrzej Potocki's comments on the Pope's visit to Kraków ("Russophobia in Poland," October *Atlantic*) kindled a memory. On the morning the Pope spoke to an estimated two million people in the city's huge park, the correspondent Reid Collins and I found ourselves far behind the *milicja* barricades, unable to see the Pope and denied permission to set up our broadcasting equipment for recording purposes. Things looked grim as we stood helplessly in the midst of the enormous crowd. And then, just as the Pope began to speak, as though a silent signal had been given, the people around us opened a narrow path that led to the barricades; a thousand men and women and children stepped back while others lifted us onto their shoulders and carried us to a spot where we could see, and report. Not a word was spoken. Not a sound was made. And, yes, Potocki was right: "You could hear birds singing in the sky."

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REPORTS & COMMENT

WASHINGTON REAGAN'S MX SURPRISE

Does Reagan the President, like Reagan the candidate, really believe in "the window of vulnerability"?



IN DECIDING NOT to place the MX missile on "racetracks" or in deceptive shelters throughout the American Southwest, the Reagan Administration did more than it intended to do. The President and his political advisers apparently based their choice on practicalities—the political resistance to the missile in Nevada and Utah, the growing cost, the uncertainties about how many new warheads the Soviet Union could build to attack the system. It would be easier on all counts, the administration decided, to build 100 MX missiles (half as many as the Carter Administration had planned) and begin placing them in shelters already built for older missiles.

But the result of such practical calculations may well be to transform the theories that loom so large in determining nuclear strategy. Indeed, despite every intention to the contrary, the administration may have succeeded in subverting the theory that has shaped American nuclear plans in recent years—and that contributed more than a little to Ronald Reagan's election as President.

The theory in question concerns the "winnability" of nuclear wars. A school of thought has emerged to argue that nuclear warfare should be regarded not

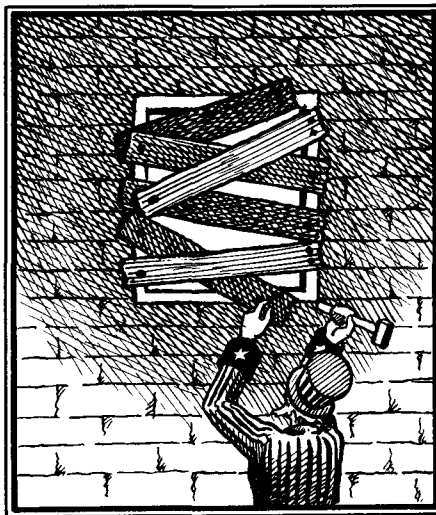
as mutual annihilation but rather as an exchange from which one side might emerge with significantly less damage than the other. In that sense, one side may be said to have "won" the war, even though both sides would be worse off than before the war began. In the same sense, according to this theory, nuclear weapons themselves must be thought of as militarily functional and useful, like mortars or tanks. They must be designed for use in controlled, graduated ways—to attack the enemy's communication lines, for example, or his airfields—so that nuclear warfare need not be a spasm of destruction. The "war-fighting" view of nuclear strategy is opposed to the "deterrent" philosophy, which is that the only military function of nuclear weapons is to deliver an ultimate retaliatory blow—and by threatening to do so, to prevent both sides from resorting to their use.

When advanced by American authors, the implication of the war-fighting theory has not been that the U.S. should prepare to launch and

"win" a nuclear war against the Soviet Union. Instead, they have argued that the Soviet Union is laying such plans and that we must be prepared to thwart them. The best way to do so, they conclude, is to build nuclear weapons that give us the full range of war-fighting options, so that no matter what the level of nuclear conflict, the U.S. could be confident of coming out on top.

The most consistent and articulate exponent of this theory has been Paul Nitze, who was on the team negotiating the first SALT treaty and is a consultant on arms control to the Reagan Administration. In 1956, Nitze published in *Foreign Affairs* an article called "Atoms, Strategy, and Policy," which stands in total harmony with his positions of the subsequent twenty-five years. In that article, he explained why America must possess a refined nuclear war-fighting capability if it hoped to keep the peace:

The second meaning of the word "win," the comparison between the postwar position of the victor and the defeated, brings out why it is also of the utmost importance that the West maintain a sufficient margin of superior capability so that if general war occurred we could "win" in the second sense. The greater that margin (and the more clearly the Communists understand that we have a margin), the less likely it is that nuclear war will ever occur. The greater that margin, the greater are our chances of seeing to it that nuclear war, if it does come, is fought rationally and that the resulting destruction is kept to the lowest levels feasible.



ILLUSTRATIONS BY JEAN FRANÇOIS ALLAUX

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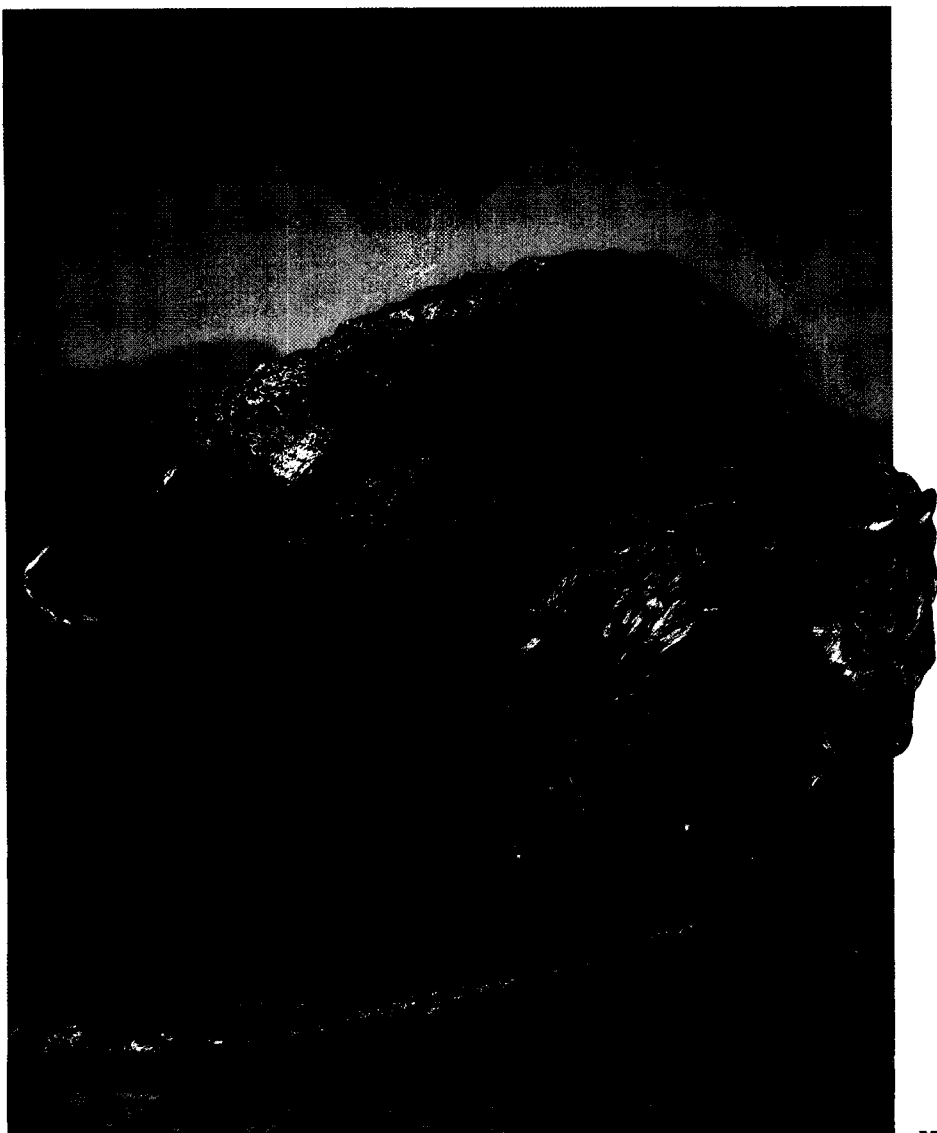


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presents

THUNDER ON THE PLAINS

by Chapel

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the Federation's first collection
of original wildlife sculptures.
A dramatic new work
in the great tradition of
bronze animal sculpture.



Shown smaller than actual size. Overall height: 7 inches.

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Thunder on the Plains is available in a limited edition — reserved *exclusively* for those who order from the Federation's first collection of original wildlife sculptures during 1981. The appointed issuing agent, The Franklin Gallery, will fulfill all valid orders, and then the edition will be permanently closed. A Certificate of Authenticity from the National Wildlife Federation will accompany each sculpture.

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Limit: One per person.

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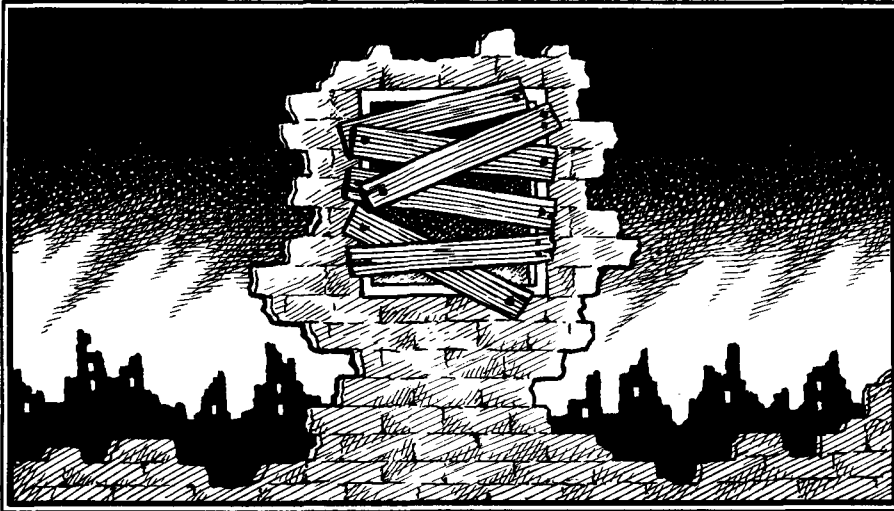
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In that article, Nitze also introduced a distinction that takes the war-fighting view to its level of greatest sophistication. It is not necessary to believe that such a war will actually occur, he said, or that the Soviet Union would launch an attack once it had determined that it could "win" by emerging with fewer casualties. All that is required to shift the balance of international power is the recognition on both sides of what would happen if war should break out:

The situation is analogous to a game of chess. The atomic queens may never be brought into play; they may never actually take one of the opponent's pieces. But the position of the atomic queens may still have a decisive bearing on which side can safely advance a limited-war bishop or even a cold-war pawn. The advance of a cold-war pawn may even disclose a check of the opponent's king by a well-positioned atomic queen.

In order to demonstrate that America might "lose" a war, despite its unquestioned ability to destroy the Soviet Union in a retaliatory strike, the war-fighting theory required that several conditions apply all at once. One was that the most important part of the American nuclear force be vulnerable to destruction in a surprise "first strike" by the Soviet Union. In the middle 1950s, when Nitze wrote his *Foreign Affairs* article, he discussed a threat to the bomber force. From the 1970s on, he and others have concentrated on the threat to the 1,000 missiles of the Minuteman force, which are located in underground "silos"

throughout the Midwest. Those missiles now represent what the bombers represented in the 1950s: the principal American tool for destroying *military* targets, especially missile silos, in the Soviet Union. If we lose our land-based missiles to a surprise attack, the argument goes, we would have no alternative but to use our remaining, less-accurate weapons (such as missiles launched from submarines) in a suicidal counterattack on Moscow and Leningrad. It would be suicidal because the Russians would fire back at New York and Los Angeles; no rational leader would take the step that would mean his nation's death. Instead, he would accept whatever terms the Soviet Union chose to dictate.

Although the war-fighting theory has been articulated throughout a generation, it reached its zenith in the past five years. Then it took the familiar form of the "window of vulnerability," for which the MX system was the proposed solution. The "vulnerability" arose from the Soviet Union's supposed ability, with its increasingly accurate missiles, to destroy our Minuteman force in a surprise attack involving some 2,000 warheads. "Window" referred to the gap of time until we could put corrective measures into effect. When the U.S. was in this "window," the theory went, we would be in the sort of nuclear checkmate Paul Nitze described. If we undertook too daring a defense of our interests, the Soviet Union would point silently to its "atomic queen," and we would prepare our pawns and rooks for retreat. Soon we would not dare even contemplate self-defense.

There were a few dissents to the war-

fighters' concept of a "window of vulnerability." Some officials, such as Dean Rusk, pointed out that in the real world, as opposed to the land of theory, no President would sit still, rationally calculating his alternatives and holding his fire, as 2,000 atomic bombs exploded on American soil. Others, from the technical community, discussed the extreme uncertainties that would confront the Soviet Union as it contemplated a first strike: its national survival would depend on the outcome, but it would have no realistic evidence about whether its missiles would hit their targets, or whether the explosion of one warhead would deflect another, or whether the Americans would fire as soon as they saw the incoming missiles on their radar.

Nonetheless, the "window of vulnerability" dominated official thought and action during the late 1970s. The Carter Administration acknowledged the existence of the "window" when it approved the MX missile in 1979. Two hundred of these missiles were supposed to be rotated, in secret, among several thousand buried shelters, to reduce their vulnerability to Soviet attack. The missiles would also be more accurate than the Minuteman, which would theoretically improve America's war-fighting capacity and make the Soviet Union worry about the vulnerability of its missile force. Republican military strategists contended that Carter's decision, as always, was too late and too weak. The opponents of Carter's foreign policy claimed that his timidity was proof that we were *already* "in the window." It was this situation that candidate Reagan promised to rectify.

FOR SOME OF THE war-fighters, continued progress on the MX was not a sufficient answer. Nitze and several others recommended "quick fixes" that would close the window right away. These included starting up the Minuteman production lines and deploying more missiles in a hurry; hiding missiles among empty silos, as in a shell game; rapid production of new bombers or interceptors; fielding large numbers of smaller missiles, such as one puckishly known as "Midget Man"; and defending the Minuteman silos with "anti-ballistic missiles."

It is safe to say that none of the war-fighters imagined that they would get what Ronald Reagan finally gave them.

1981 U.S. Gov't Report:

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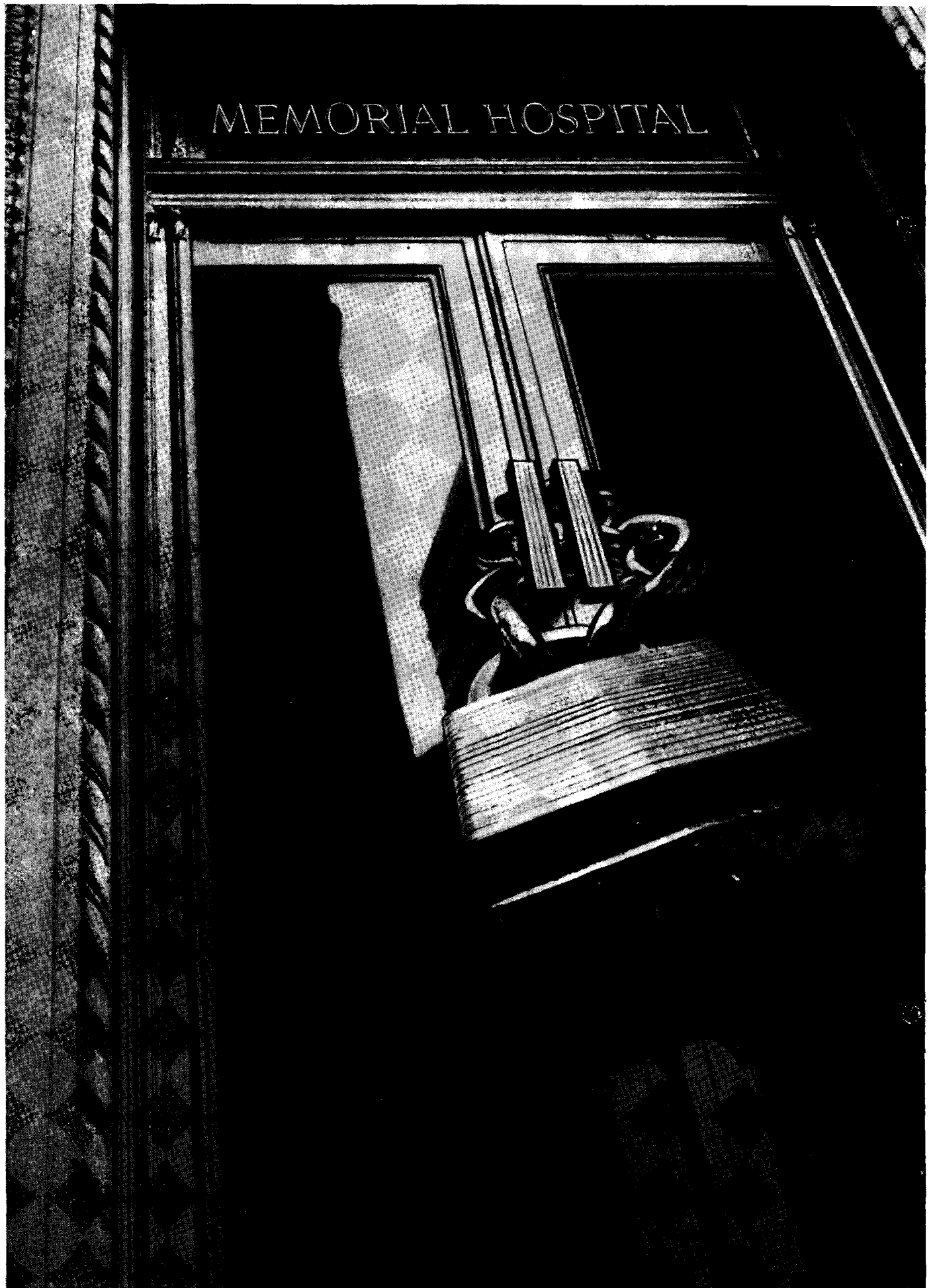
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Some hospitals are facing serious problems these days.
Problems like extinction.

The federal government pays only part of the hospital costs incurred by Medicare/Medicaid patients. Hospitals are forced to pass the remaining costs on to private patients.

This practice is called cost shifting. It's unfair. Private patients should not be billed for hospital costs the government doesn't pay.

A study of federal government data reveals the severity of cost shifting. The difference between hospital charges and Medicare/Medicaid payments has more than doubled in ten years. This same study shows that underpayments by Medicare/Medicaid that were shifted to private patients amounted to nearly \$3 billion in 1979 alone. On an average daily basis, Medicare/Medicaid payments were \$198, while private patients were charged an estimated \$239 for the same service. The gap could widen if the government cuts back on budgets allocated to these programs.

In areas that have many publicly supported patients, the repercussions of cost shifting become more severe. Hospitals that have fewer private patients are forced to absorb those costs themselves. This can lead to bankruptcy and forced closings, which in turn denies proper health care to people in these areas. This isn't speculation. In a number of states, hospitals with a high percentage of Medicare and Medicaid patients are in severe financial distress.

Everyone wants to cut health care costs. But shifting these costs doesn't save a cent. It just puts the responsibility for payment on somebody else's shoulders.

Insurance companies are working hard to contain costs with such coverages as second opinions for surgery, outpatient surgery, and hospital preadmission testing.

TWO WORDS COULD CLOSE THIS HOSPITAL: COST SHIFTING.

But these measures won't solve the problem of cost shifting. The best solution ultimately is equality of payment among all payers. This is not a theory, it's a reality now in two states.

In Maryland and New Jersey an arrangement exists under which Medicare and Medicaid pay the same charges for the same hospital services as everyone else. If *all* states had this arrangement, the result everywhere would be equal payment for private and government patients.

We hope that, someday soon, hospitals won't have to worry about keeping themselves alive. That way, they can concentrate on keeping people alive.

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The administration's decision amounts to nothing less than dismissing the fundamental premise of the war-fighting theory. For the next few years, the MX missiles will go into existing silos, whose locations the Russians undoubtedly know. If we were vulnerable before the MX, we will be more vulnerable afterward, because a more powerful part of the nuclear force will be in these immovable, unconcealed silos. Despite all the cosmetic talk about protecting the missiles by "hardening" the silos (a step never regarded as serious before this announcement), despite all the promises to keep re-examining options, the plainest meaning of the decision is this: *The President does not believe that "vulnerability" really matters.* If he did, he could not in conscience have made this choice.

Perhaps the administration will eventually explain this policy away as a mistake or an aberration. But it seems at least as likely that the concept of vulnerability, and the war-fighting edifice that is built on top of it, have been permanently fractured. The idea of the Red Chinese menace never regained its full political potency once its most likely supporter, President Richard Nixon, recanted his belief in 1971. President Ronald Reagan's actions cannot be dismissed as arising from an anti-defense bias; yet he has now recanted the most important element of the war-fighters' creed.

"I believe you'll see a series of aftershocks," Larry Smith, a congressional assistant who has specialized in nuclear strategy for the past ten years, said at the time of the decision. "This theory won't go away all at once." He said that the aftershocks would come in stages, as follows:

In the first stage, immediately following the decision, the administration would try to explain how its decision was faithful to war-fighting doctrine and would close the window of vulnerability. Indeed, on the day of the decision, President Reagan was redefining "window of vulnerability" to mean the worldwide line-up of troops, ships, and tanks. In the following weeks, the administration put out a series of stories about improvements in their communications systems that would enhance America's ability to fight—and win—a prolonged nuclear war. At the same time, those who had believed in the window of vulnerability, including the

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, were crying betrayal, and the spokesmen for arms control were contending that no MX should be built because it gave the Russians reason to fear a first strike.

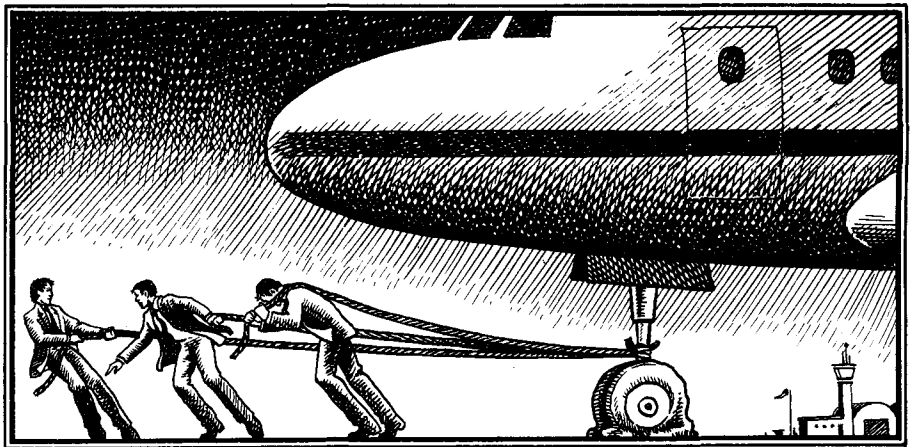
In the next stage of reaction, Smith predicted, the administration would yearn for a solution that would seem consistent with its previous pronouncements about vulnerability, and would reconsider an anti-ballistic-missile system, reopening the bitter technical and strategic arguments about that subject. Later still, he said, administration officials would either explicitly declare the land-based missiles "survivable" or would shift their emphasis to the undersea force of Trident missiles and submarines.

"But after it all, the point of view represented by the war-fighters will be like Humpty Dumpty. All the king's horses and all the king's men won't be able to put it together again. Whether or not the theory itself ever made sense, practical realities will have overturned it."

The demise of one theory does not automatically prepare the way for a more realistic and coherent policy on nuclear weapons or for a more acute appreciation of their dangers. But such developments may be easier in the absence of the war-fighting belief than in its presence.

—James Fallows

James Fallows is the author of the recently published book National Defense.



AIR TRAVEL STRIKE MEANS FRIENDLY SKIES FOR AIRLINES

*A different view of what happened
to the air-traffic controllers,
and of how deregulation
really affected the industry*

THE AIR-TRAFFIC controllers have rescued the airlines from the ravages of deregulation, though neither the government nor the industry has had the courtesy to thank them for it. For the two airlines nearest to collapse—Pan American and Braniff—and for others losing millions of dollars, the 25 percent cutback on air traffic imposed by the secretary of transportation in response

to the strike is a welcome restriction. Contrary to popular belief, regular air fares (coach and first-class) will go down and profits will eventually be restored. Sanity may yet return.

From its inception in November of 1978, deregulation of the airlines was very different from deregulation of the oil industry. When oil companies demanded oil and natural-gas deregulation, they were saying that they needed freedom to raise artificially low prices as an incentive for exploration. Those who gave us airline deregulation, however, began with the argument that the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) had kept fares artificially high, had zealously protected established airlines from the rigors of the marketplace, and had disregarded consumer demand for cheap, "no-frills" travel. One of Senator Edward Kennedy's favorite claims was that because airlines could get the CAB to approve whatever fares they wished, they could afford to waste money on

such enticements as "Mozart over Missouri," 'Lasagna over Los Angeles,' piano bars, and polka-dotted planes." His objection was that the exorbitant fares charged to cover these gimmicks prevented people from taking flights.

Deregulation was advertised in typical antitrust fashion. With only the market to decide the airlines' routes and ticket prices, new companies would be formed. Old and new airlines would respond to competition by scheduling more flights to more cities. The pressure to reduce prices would be overwhelming, cost-cutting would become routine, travelers in every rate class would pay lower fares, and airline profits would grow. With the free market working its way, the CAB would not be needed (indeed, its demolition, by act of Congress, is already under way and scheduled for completion in 1984). As it turned out, most of the advocates' expectations were realized, but the result was to make worse some problems that the airlines already faced.

Deregulation champions overlooked the most basic aspects of any transportation system. Suppose I wish to fly from New York to Los Angeles. American, TWA, and United offer me seats on flights scheduled in close proximity to meet peak demand. In Milton Friedman's already classic phrase, I am "free to choose" one of them, but the other two must then fly with empty seats. This is an old quandary—even under the CAB, an airline rarely had a route all to itself—and over the years the airlines have tried several solutions.

One strategy has been overbooking, since experience shows that only rarely do all passengers holding reservations show up for a flight. Every so often, however, an airline guesses wrong, and loses somebody's business. For example, USAir acquired a lifetime enemy a few years ago when Ralph Nader appeared to claim his seat, only to be told the plane was full. He sued, successfully, and new rules forced airlines to give "bumped" passengers a much lower fare on the next available flight. Nader, convinced he had been wronged by the shared monopoly practices of regulated companies, became a more ardent advocate of deregulation.

Another strategy was last attempted about a decade ago, when the chairman of the CAB at the time, Secor Browne, arranged for the three airlines assigned the transcontinental routes to cut back

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on the number of flights, to reduce "overcapacity." This worked for a time, but the airlines, competing for passengers, could not be persuaded to freeze their schedules for long. Moreover, those dedicated to free-market principles roundly attacked the arrangement as a collusive antitrust violation.

A third solution has been to offer all sorts of discount fares to anyone willing to meet certain conditions (such as buying tickets well in advance so that airlines can collect interest on the money sooner). The original idea seemed sensible enough. An airline would offer a limited number of cut-rate fares in order to attract new passengers. Because some seats on any flight are likely to be empty, a discount fare would attract new passengers to fill them, and return some revenue on the seats rather than none. But although the reduced fares have this benefit for the airlines, they can also take seats from passengers willing to pay the full fare.

THE EFFECT OF deregulation on the empty-seat problem, itself a function of competition, was only to add more airlines to the struggle, and more seats that could never be filled at full price. Existing airlines (Eastern and Pan Am) decided to go after some of the transcontinental business, and two newer ones (World Airways and Capitol) did the same thing. Seven airlines now compete on coast-to-coast routes once handled by three. And with the expansion of Allegheny (now USAir) and Republic, the number of airlines in the "major" or "trunk-route" category rose from ten to twelve. The result was an all-out price war (something like the gas wars one recalls from years past), in which many companies were forced to offer more and more bargains, at below cost, if they wanted to stay in the game at all.

There was, at first, an upsurge in travel. There was even a vast improvement in profits for the year 1978, in the latter months of which deregulation took effect. That year the scheduled carriers made a record \$1.4 billion, and they were euphoric about the future. (They had not yet begun to pay for the expanded facilities they installed to meet what everyone thought would be a permanent increase in travel demand.) Alfred Kahn, the CAB chairman who presided over deregulation in 1978, bragged of his achievement, and Milton

Friedman rushed into print to declare deregulation a "dramatic success." Even some airline presidents overcame their initial anxieties and became ardent champions of the new scheme, each thinking his company so obviously superior that passengers would flock to it. (Alfred Kahn said that Eastern's president, Frank Borman, thanked him.) But other interested parties wondered if all the new tourist travelers would become repeaters, and how long airlines could survive the price wars.

Looking backward, it seems it was inevitable that the bubble would burst. More competition and more choices for passengers meant more empty seats than ever, and discount fares could not solve the problem. For those who followed the business—including some Wall Street financial houses—two indicators of the disaster to come were obvious early on. One was a suddenly increasing gap between the percentage of seats that must be sold to avoid losing money (called the break-even-load factor) and the percentage of seats actually sold (called the actual-load factor). Over the past decade, the actual-load factors of the trunk lines had never fallen substantially below the break-even requirement. In 1979 and 1980, the percentage of seats sold stayed at or above 60 percent, but so many of the seats were at a discount—or even given away, in promotional coupons—that break-even factors became higher than ever, since it takes more passengers at discount than at full fare to meet the cost of the trip. Lots of people were flying, but up to 5 percent fewer than necessary for the airlines to make money. This seems a small percentage, but the rule of thumb is that a one percent gap equals a \$100 million annual loss for the companies. The second sign of trouble was the steady and substantial increases in standard fares, as airlines tried to recover losses on discount fares by soaking those who *had* to fly. These increases alienated business travelers, the airlines' bread and butter, and the number of regular-fare tickets sold fell off.

In 1979, the first full year of deregulation, the profits of the scheduled carriers dropped by well over 80 percent, to \$199 million. In 1980, the scheduled carriers suffered a loss of \$225 million, the highest in their history. The total number of passenger trips last year declined by 10 million, despite all the breaks on

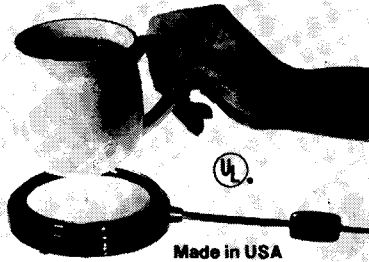
ticket prices. This year, up until the strike, most of the trunk-route carriers were still in bad shape.

What the airlines sorely needed, of course, was some method for limiting all this overcapacity (empty seats), and none of the old solutions was available. Overbooking, for example, had become a Catch-22 proposition: When a passenger buys a discount ticket early, the seat must be guaranteed even though the passenger has the privilege of canceling at the last minute. If then there is no room on the plane for a passenger reserved at full fare, the airline must absorb a loss. Furthermore, with the market already saturated with discount fares, only ridiculously low fares would have lured enough new business to fill all the planes flying a popular route. And in the era of deregulation, the almost-folded CAB could not preside over voluntary agreements to limit flights. (After all, the Justice Department was attacking the television networks for daring to agree among themselves to restrict the amount of advertising in prime-time hours.)

Nonetheless, some airlines had managed to curtail their schedules on their own, as best they could, given their contractual obligations to employees, ticket offices, and so forth. Some negotiated salary cuts or freezes with employees, or persuaded pilots to fly more hours for the same pay. But no airline could suspend the discount fares without surrendering to competitors, and there was no way for all the airlines together to cut back as radically as their profit-and-loss statements demanded without provoking suspicions of conspiracy and general strikes, which would suspend business altogether. The controllers' strike did for the airlines what they could not do for themselves.

If Drew Lewis, secretary of transportation, is to be believed, the air-traffic-control system will not be "normalized" for two to three years. Some people, myself included, think that if many of the strikers are not returned to duty, restoration will take much longer. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has relied for years on new controllers having already had some military experience. Training people—even laid-off pilots—with no experience as controllers will take time. Thus deregulation, a thing of the past for the twenty-two largest airports where flights have been restricted, will continue to be

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suspended at least for a period long enough to register the advantages. Lewis has decreed that the national system will operate at the present frequency until April of 1982 at the earliest. The airlines can only benefit, because the flights dropped were not needed: when three airplanes on a route fly two-thirds empty, putting all the passengers on one plane makes sense.

THE AIR-TRAFFIC controllers and the FAA had been fighting for years over working conditions, not to mention safety questions associated with allegedly obsolete FAA equipment. Some congressional investigations gave the agency low marks, and it is worth noting that whatever the facts concerning job stress, American controllers were working longer hours with fewer days off than any of their counterparts in the Western world. It is at least understandable, however, that the FAA, charged with overall air safety, did not wish to admit that the controllers had a case.

The plans for operating a control system without at least some of the controllers began with Langhorne Bond, Jimmy Carter's FAA chief. His relations with the controllers were as bad as can be imagined. University professors hired by the FAA to do research on the controllers' working conditions told a *New York Times* reporter that Bond was simply uninterested in their findings. I noticed that when he appeared on television to discuss the issues, he seemed barely able to control his anger when controllers appeared with him.

Bond announced in the *Federal Register* that contingency plans were being prepared. He asked the airlines to submit schedules for various levels of reduced operations, and then set about training supervisors to run the new "flow control" system in the event of a strike. The enterprise must have been something like a Pentagon planning exercise, the key question being exactly how many controllers would actually walk out if a strike ensued. It seems clear that the project occupied much of Bond's time during his final year, and that his permanent senior assistants passed the plans along to Reagan's FAA chief, J. Lynn Helms.

It defies belief that the FAA and the Department of Transportation could have engaged in joint planning with the airlines for two years without learning

along the way that the airlines would not suffer much, and indeed might benefit a great deal, from reduced operations. For the controllers' part, while they knew that the FAA was preparing for a strike, they were given no idea how thoroughly. They, like most Americans, assumed that all the flights in the air were needed, but government and industry knew better. If the controllers had known how weak their position was, they would probably have taken a less militant stance, as is the common practice these days in unions whose employers lay the facts before them.

When the strike began, Secretary Lewis announced immediately that he considered the control system overstaffed. There were too many controllers performing miscellaneous clerical tasks, and too many supervisors. (For that matter, Lewis's estimate seems reasonable. Like most other parties involved, the FAA had assumed that deregulation would increase business more than it did.) The strike provided an excuse to withdraw controllers from some small airports, in actions that parallel the closing of military bases. Fewer controllers may mean less safety at small airports, and possibly easier access for drug smugglers, but the overriding advantage is the contribution to Reagan's budget cuts if the controllers do not return to those airports. With fewer controllers at work, many of them without seniority and so at lower salaries, that contribution will increase. Although much new equipment is scheduled for purchase, some of the money will come from salaries that are no longer being paid.

I do not mean by this description of the strike to defend everything the controllers did, for much of their bad press is deserved. But if two administrations had no wish for the strike, it is hard to understand why they did so much to provoke it. Lewis's repeated assertions that too many controllers were at work reveal his interest in getting rid of some of them, though he may well have thought that only the hard-line union members would stay on strike after the President's warning, thus giving him a pretty good bargain—a smaller work force and a more compliant union. (He ended up with a better bargain still, because the union is not merely compliant but, apparently, broken.)

This is not the place to take on all the

arguments about the feasibility of the new system. Since the assumption that reduced operations can be safe and efficient has been accepted, both the Reagan Administration and the airlines are free to serve their vested interest in the continuation of the strike and the return of regulation. The longer the new system works, the greater that interest will be. "Overcapacity" has diminished. The actual-load factors for last August improved significantly, and fewer empty seats are the best standard of efficiency (and fuel conservation). The only remaining obstacles are the public's fears about safety (the pilots' union has leaped to provide reassurance, but a few pilots have spoken out to the contrary) and about being stranded because return flights are full (the airlines are spending a lot of money to advertise "availability"). To borrow the famous slogan, the airlines face "friendlier skies" in terms of profits they badly need. One wonders whether and when the government and the airlines will acknowledge this to be so.

For the immediate future, neither the government nor the industry can be expected to announce that aviation is really better off for the strike. The Reagan Administration has been attempting to levy continued punishment on the controllers, from "decertifying" the union as a bargaining agent to throwing some of its leaders in jail. It would hardly do to admit that the controllers have done anything but cause serious damage. As for the airlines, they seek to blame all layoffs on the controllers (though they were glad to have the excuse), and because their treasuries are depleted, they seek reimbursement from the union treasury for lost revenue, mostly from discount passengers they no longer have to fly below cost.

On August 30 of this year, *The New York Times*, an ardent champion of deregulation since it was first proposed, devoted its lead editorial to a plea that President Reagan "temper justice with mercy" by offering to rehire some controllers on *his* terms, so that the country could once again enjoy "the benefits of air deregulation," including those wonderful discount fares. Considering the items about the airline business that appeared elsewhere in the *Times* that day, and the previous week, the column demonstrates the staying power of free-market mythology.

The business section that Sunday re-

ported that Wall Street financiers were predicting a change from red to black ink for the airlines, an improvement attributed to the strike and the flight limitations. Just four days earlier, United had taken an entire page to advertise an October reduction in the transcontinental round-trip coach fare from \$940 to \$600—a 36 percent drop. Pan Am followed later with a reduction to 1979 coach fares for the same route. As usual, the opinion-makers were oblivious of the evidence before them; "the benefits of deregulation" is a staple phrase in the kits of most editorial writers. To give the columnists their due, they have lots of help.

In the past few years, the CAB has designed its statistical analyses to make deregulation appear more beneficial than it is. The standard measure of price trends has been "average fares paid." With discount passengers (and even people flying free on coupons) tallied, these averages did indeed decline, but they hid enormous increases in regular fares. A great deal of self-delusion has corrupted discussion. I recall being on a radio talk show about a year ago, debating James C. Miller III, then a fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, later Vice President Bush's chief assistant in the drive against regulations of all kinds, and now chairman of the Federal Trade Commission. A long-time friend of airline deregulation, he referred again and again to average fares paid and to discount fares, but he would not talk about standard fares or airline losses across the board.

Faced with these enormous losses, defenders of deregulation have resorted to a variety of excuses and false claims. They have pointed to the slumping economy, claiming that airline profits would be up if only the economy as a whole would "pick up," ignoring the economic shibboleth that any free-market system will automatically correct itself for a decline in demand. They have pointed to higher fuel prices, even though standard coach fares rose much faster than fuel prices. And they have labeled the airlines "inefficient," even though the major airlines are among the most experienced organizations in the world. When any industry suddenly suffers the worst financial year in its history, it makes no sense to conclude that it has abruptly forgotten how to manage itself.

The airlines were clearly in need of

drastic change, but President Reagan's summary sacking of 12,000 people is a particularly ruthless cure. Further, what evidence is in so far shows that this administration and its Democratic predecessor lured the controllers into an ambush: they were allowed to believe they were essential when they were not. This is bad-faith bargaining, whatever the legal status of the government's actions might be.

From the business point of view, however, the gradual recovery of the industry over the next two years will stand in sharp contrast with the disaster caused by deregulation in the two years preceding. The only thing left to worry about is the inordinate regulatory authority now vested in the secretary of transportation. Whereas the CAB once had power to assign domestic routes, Drew Lewis now controls both routes and schedules for domestic and foreign airlines. No matter how even-handed he tries to be, somebody is bound to accuse him of making back-room political deals. Already he has been under pressure to take flights away from established airlines so that new companies can expand. Unfortunately, with the freeze on flights, neither the new nor the old companies can be accommodated in a way that will seem fair to them. It will be a pity if Lewis ends up giving airline regulation a bad name, as occurred when Hoover's postmaster general first established control over the fledgling airline industry, fifty years ago.

Rather than the sole authority now exercised by a political appointee, the major airlines need some sort of national commission to reorganize the airline map, in order to cut down still more on competition and overcapacity, compensating the companies that would be denied routes. Were the need for regulation admitted, steps might also be taken to compensate the people the airlines have laid off as a result of the strike—and even the controllers. We might at least understand that when Milton Friedman and Ralph Nader agree about something, both are likely to be thoroughly confused. We cannot afford complete deregulation.

—Frederick Thayer

Frederick Thayer is a professor in the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh. He has written extensively on air-transport policy.



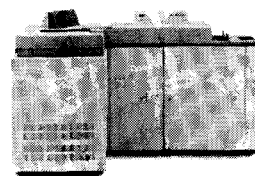
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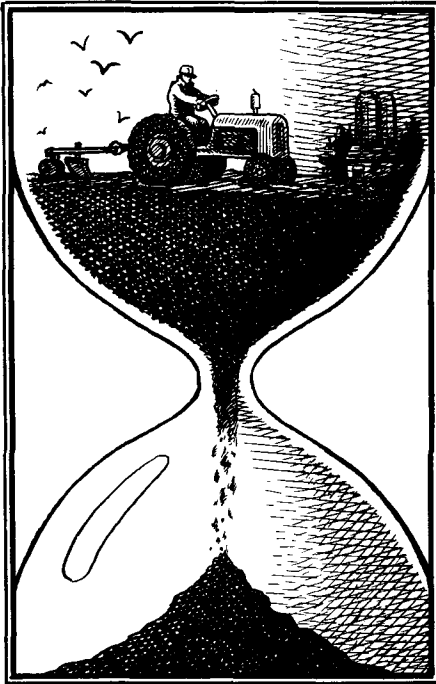
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AGRICULTURE

WILL THE CORN BELT END UP IN THE RIVERS?

Conservationists are exploring new methods of saving topsoil, which can melt away at the rate of thirty-two tons per acre per year



IN TAZEWELL COUNTY, Illinois, about eight weeks before the corn came in, I climbed a barbed-wire-topped fence with Leroy Holtsclaw and Owen Ingram, and crashed into a jungle of cornstalks to see what they are doing to keep the Corn Belt from sliding away down the Mississippi River. The corn was seven feet tall to its tassels, and pollen rained on our heads as we bullied our way through the densely packed stalks, spreading a thick yellow haze through motionless air that felt five or ten degrees warmer than the air outside the field. Ingram, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service's man in Tazewell County, and Holtsclaw, his boss, the supervisor of a fourteen-county area in central Illinois, were much more adept than I at picking a path through the growth, and I fell behind them a few times, feeling a vague sense of panic at the prospect of being irretrievably lost

no more than ten yards from my guides. I blindly followed the sound of the rustling corn and caught up with them only when they stopped to have a look at something they considered significant, which, fortunately, was fairly often.

We were on a sixteen-acre field of fabled Illinois topsoil—the kind responsible for 16 percent of the nation's corn crop, 17 percent of the nation's soybeans, and nearly a tenth of all U.S. farm exports—and our tour was divided into two parts. First, the problem, which was in evidence on the western three fourths of the field. Ingram squatted to point out a rivulet between corn plants, a small but well-defined channel carved in the soil by moving water. A little farther on, he stopped to examine a grounded cornstalk, toppled by wind after water had washed the soil from around its roots. These were signs of rill erosion, one of the two major types of water erosion that plague the Corn Belt. (Wind erosion is not much of a problem here.) The other major type, sheet erosion, in which soil is washed away in very thin and fairly uniform layers, was not visible, but it was happening just the same, Ingram assured me. The field sloped from southeast to northwest, losing eight or nine feet in altitude every hundred feet, and, as we walked down the slope, the ground squishing audibly beneath our shoes, the soil grew progressively wetter, the rivulets larger, the felled stalks more plentiful. Some of the soil that was washing off this field would end up in the Gulf of Mexico at the mouth of the Mississippi, traveling via Lick Creek, to the north, and the Illinois River, to the west, carrying polluting agricultural chemicals as it went; some would fill in watercourses along the way, causing floods in low-lying roadways and croplands during and after heavy rains. The rest we found in a sad, barren expanse on the western edge of the field, near the inlet to a drainage lake: here only a few nitrogen-starved corn plants, stunted and yellow, poked up bravely through a cover of soggy black muck. I pushed my middle finger to its second knuckle into the muck. According to the best estimating method available, Ingram said, each of the twelve acres in this part of the field was losing soil at the rate of about thirty-two tons per year.

Having seen the problem, we turned

to the east for the solution. Immediately adjacent to this twelve-acre plot—indistinguishable from it, in fact, from anything more than a few yards away—was a four-acre plot that was losing about six tons of soil per acre each year, much closer to the rate that conservationists think can be permitted without long-term damage. This plot was not soggy, and its rivulets were less conspicuous—an indication that much of the water from the last rain had percolated into the soil instead of running off. Weeds, principally dandelions and orchard grass, were much more plentiful among the corn plants here, but they didn't seem to be disturbing the crop too much; although they could compete with the corn for water and nutrients, Ingram said, they could not reach high enough to compete for sunlight. Here and there we encountered a bald spot, a place where field mice had got to the seed, but the plant population, as measured earlier in the season, was not much lower here than in the other plot—about 19,500 plants per acre as opposed to about 21,000, a reduction of approximately 7 percent—and Owen Ingram guessed that the water damage we had seen in the first plot would eliminate even that margin of difference. The larger section, however, had been cultivated in the traditional manner: after the last harvest, the earth had been turned over with a moldboard plow, which had buried the field's weeds and the residue of the previous crop, replacing them with a handsome, flat layer of dark soil from below; then the ground had been disked three times (a less vigorous form of plowing) and planted.

The smaller plot, on the other hand, had been cultivated according to a method called "zero tillage," or "no till," which is to say it hadn't really been cultivated at all: the vegetation on the ground had been left there to protect the soil from erosion, and the corn had been planted right through it, by a machine that cuts only narrow slits for the deposit of seeds. Owen Ingram had no way of knowing for sure how the yields of the two plots would compare at harvest time, but for the moment all looked good, and he was happy.

Ingram had flown over the field the day before, he said, and had challenged his flying companions, one of them a farmer, to distinguish the zero-tilled section from the conventionally tilled

one. "I couldn't even tell them apart," Ingram said, "and I knew where the line was." If the yields of the two plots did turn out to be comparable, even roughly so, Ingram would be haranguing farmers about it all winter. For although zero tillage and other, less extreme forms of "conservation tillage" undercut some of the farmer's most deeply rooted prejudices—for example, the notion that a weedy, unworked field means a sloppy, nonworking farmer—they seem to be the best hope of solving an erosion problem that conservationists see as an impending national disaster. Thus, to put it in the simplest terms possible, the government wants farmers to stop plowing their land.

TEN TONS OF TOPSOIL spread over an acre of ground measures roughly a fifteenth of an inch in depth. In Aroostook County, Maine, the famous potato-growing region, some sloping fields are losing as much as an inch of soil a year to erosion, according to the Soil Conservation Service (SCS); since intensive cultivation began on these fields after World War II, two feet of soil have disappeared. In the area known as the Palouse, which covers parts of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and produces wheat, barley, and peas, the runoff from rain and melting snow carries more than half an inch of soil annually from some fields. Parts of the fertile southern Mississippi Valley, where eastern Arkansas meets Mississippi and Tennessee, are losing almost an eighth of an inch annually. The Corn Belt, the most productive agricultural land on the continent, has trouble spots that equal the worst of these, and, overall, erosion proceeds there at what the SCS calls one of the highest rates in the country.

Illinois cropland loses an average of 6.7 tons of soil per acre per year, about two tons more than the average for cropland nationwide. Iowa and Missouri lose 9.9 and 10.9 tons, respectively. A report by the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency estimates that in parts of Illinois where the topsoil was once thirteen inches deep, more than half of it is now gone. Farmers, conservationists, and others close to the land know that in some places the problem is much worse than that: they have seen crops planted in the yellow, clayey subsoil that once lay far beneath the surface. Much of the rich black topsoil that

the area is famous for—and for which farmers pay a premium price—can be found today near the banks of the Illinois and Mississippi rivers in layers of alluvial soil more than twenty inches deep.

In the past, and even now, relating such soil losses to the food supply has been an imprecise and speculative business—one complicated particularly by the steady increases in farm yields brought about by such advances as hybrid seed, fertilizers and pesticides, and more efficient farm machinery (which enables the farmer to plant and harvest quickly, at precisely the right time). Few doubt, however, that the relationship exists, and the small amount of hard data available suggests that it becomes significant as farmers approach the limits of yield-increasing technology. In separate studies conducted in the southern Piedmont region and in western Tennessee, soil losses of six inches have been found to reduce crop yields more than 40 percent. On some soils in the Corn Belt, where 43 percent of the land devoted to row crops is considered highly erodible, the U.S. Department of Agriculture has projected that potential yields of corn and soybeans could be reduced by as much as 30 percent if the present rates of erosion are allowed to continue through the year 2030—this at a time when the demand for food is constantly increasing and hundreds of thousands of acres of prime farmland are being lost annually to highways, subdivisions, and shopping malls.

THE U.S. GOVERNMENT has been working on erosion since 1933, when the Soil Erosion Service was formed as a temporary agency of the Department of the Interior. In 1935, in the wake of the Dust Bowl disaster, it was renamed the Soil Conservation Service and made a permanent part of the Department of Agriculture; and in 1937 it was augmented by a system of conservation districts, which now govern, through locally elected boards, soil and water conservation policies in nearly every county in the U.S. (a measure of local control that makes the SCS something of an oddity among federal bureaucracies). Judging from the few indicators available, the government—though not necessarily the SCS—made headway against erosion for a time, particularly in the 1950s and 1960s, when government efforts to

prop up grain prices, by paying farmers to devote land to hay crops and pasture, were at their peak. Since about 1970, however, the difficulty of the conservationists' task has increased dramatically. Environmentalists have identified "nonpoint-source" (i.e., diffuse) pollution, including runoff of agricultural chemicals and livestock wastes, as a major water-quality problem, and have encouraged the passage of federal and state laws that aim to bring erosion under control. Illinois law, for example, now calls for voluntary programs to reduce all erosion to the "tolerance" level—two to five tons per acre per year, depending on soil type—by the year 2000.

The erosion problem, meanwhile, seems to be getting worse. Various economic influences, including the expansion of foreign markets, have encouraged farmers to plant such crops as corn and soybeans year after year and "right up to the back yard," as one conservationist put it to me. It is no longer advantageous for Corn Belt farmers to market their crops by feeding them to hogs and cattle. They've turned livestock raising—a difficult business, requiring much more labor and day-to-day attention than crop farming—over to specialized feeding operations, and thus have little need for pastureland or such crops as alfalfa; since 1971, as Illinois has lost more than 1.6 million hogs and cattle, more than 3 million acres in the state have been turned from use for hay crops—which tend to hold down erosion by providing constant ground cover—to the production of row crops, particularly soybeans, the worst of the Corn Belt's crops from the erosion-control standpoint.

The traditional, topographic methods of erosion control—chiefly contour plowing and terracing, both of which retard the velocity of water as it runs downhill—are often not equal to the conservation problems that modern farming creates. Contouring is simply not effective enough in many cases, and terracing can be prohibitively expensive. Constructing the most modern and effective type of terrace—the "parallel tile-outlet," or "PTO," terrace, which involves drainage through underground tiles—costs \$250 to \$300 per acre, and a typical full-time farmer in Tazewell County, for example, might require several hundred acres of terraces to bring his erosion problem under control.

(Cost-sharing help is available from the federal government, but it is limited.) Further, according to Owen Ingram, more than half the land in the county is farmed by tenant farmers, who typically work under yearly contracts, splitting proceeds and most expenses with retired or absentee owners. When the owners are far absent, and care little for the condition of the land, even the most conservation-minded farmer has difficulty justifying the long-term investment that terracing requires—especially at prevailing rates of interest.

This is the mire from which conservation tillage emerges as the salvation of soil conservationists—the only realistic means by which they can hope to reach their goals. The basic idea is not new: because the greatest part of erosion damage is done as raindrops strike the ground, erosion can be decreased significantly by leaving a field covered with crop residue—dead cornstalks, soybean stubble, or whatever happened to be left after the last harvest. One form of conservation tillage, chisel plowing, is already fairly well accepted in the Corn Belt; unlike the conventional moldboard plow, which turns over all the soil in a field, the chisel plow cultivates in strips, leaving a third to a half of the previous crop's residue undisturbed. Zero tillage is more drastic: it disturbs virtually nothing, leaving as much as 6,000 pounds of residue on each acre of ground. The beauty of zero tillage, as conservationists see it, is that it's not something the farmer does but something he *doesn't* do. By simply forgoing his old plowing habits, the farmer can cut erosion on his fields by more than 90 percent. The special equipment required to cut through the crop residue can be leased or bought at relatively low cost. Indeed, conservationists are fond of pointing out that while conventional farming generally requires a minimum of four trips across a field with fuel-guzzling farm machinery (at least two for plowing, one for planting, and one for harvesting), zero tillage requires only the planting and harvesting; the farmer can actually save fuel, labor, and wear on equipment while doing his bit for posterity.

One problem with zero tillage is that something in a farmer just doesn't like the idea. The "professional" farmers in Tazewell County number about 1,400, and of these, Owen Ingram estimates,

60 to 80 percent have erosion problems that need correcting. He is aware of precisely twenty-one who are now using zero tillage, most of them on less than 20 percent of their acreage. Farmers resist the technique for various reasons, and some of them are legitimate, rational concerns that will probably be answered, in time, with experience and technology. One of them, however, is that farmers have an attitude that is reflected in the expression they use for the crop residue that conservationists want them to leave on their fields. They call it "trash."

OWEN INGRAM WILL admit—though it might take him a while to get around to it—that zero tillage is not as easy as it can be made to seem. Farmers say the big problem with it is weed control. One of the chief virtues of the old moldboard plow is that it kills weeds quite effectively—it simply buries them. A farmer who abandons plowing must turn to special herbicides to "burn back" the weeds in his fields, and these herbicides—which don't always do the job completely—increase chemical costs by about \$10 an acre. In the opinion of many farmers and some researchers, this extra cost, combined with others involved in zero tillage, can more than equal any savings. And because zero tillage is relatively new in the Corn Belt, the risks of reduced yield or failure can be significant, especially for an inexperienced farmer. For example, the conventional means of applying agricultural chemicals do not work well on zero-tilled fields: the machines used to pump anhydrous ammonia, a gaseous nitrogen additive used commonly in central Illinois, tend to become clogged with crop residue; powdered nutrients such as phosphate and potash do not leach into the soil through the vegetative cover. Chemicals can be applied with water, but this requires a "carrier" to hold the nutrients in solution; unless the farmer knows enough to use a new type of carrier, he must resist the inclination to apply his special weed killer at the same time—the commonly used clay carrier can nullify the effect of the weed killer. Other problems include insects (plowing buries them), mice (plowing routs them), and seed germination (plowed soil tends to warm up faster in the spring).

But these complications, Ingram insists, can be overcome by any careful,

management-minded farmer who seeks expert advice—the kind of advice that Ingram is there to give. More is being learned about zero tillage all the time, and the industries that supply farmers, recognizing it as the wave of the future, are beginning to produce the chemicals and special machines needed to make it virtually risk-free. As proof, Ingram can offer such farmers as Morris Wildermuth, the man who farms the cornfields we tramped through with Leroy Holtsclaw. Wildermuth, a tenant farmer, works about 800 acres on three different farms in Tazewell County, and this year he had 124 acres under zero tillage. On two plots, of twenty acres each, he received a federal cost-sharing grant of \$25 per acre, which served, in effect, as "insurance" against the risk of reduced yields. In late summer, it looked as though that money would simply be extra cash in Wildermuth's pocket. On one forty-acre plot, he harvested winter wheat in the spring and followed it immediately with soybeans for harvest in the fall; without zero tillage, which allowed him to plant the beans quickly, this "double cropping" probably wouldn't have been possible. The remainder of his zero-tilled acreage was in corn, and his zero-tilled corn was not doing noticeably worse than his conventionally tilled corn.

Some farmers in Tazewell County, of course, are not going to be impressed by Morris Wildermuth's success, or by anyone else's. Before the 1981 crop was even out of the ground, they were saying it had been an unusually good year for zero tillage; it had rained prodigiously in central Illinois, and the rain, these skeptics said, had ensured a good zero-till crop by helping to incorporate chemicals into the soil. The previous year was very dry, and, according to Owen Ingram, the same farmers said *that* was unusually good weather for zero-tilled plots, because they tend to hold moisture better than plowed ground. Guys like that, Ingram says, don't give reasons, they give excuses. They are afraid to risk a few bushels of corn one year to protect the land for future years. Or they're afraid the fellow who farms the field down the road is going to make fun of them, or spread stories that they're lazy. Or they're going to do it the tried-and-true way because it was good enough for their daddies and granddaddies and it's good enough for them.

Farmers are often called our best conservationists, but sometimes their hearts can't agree with what their minds tell them is right. And when you ask a farmer to stop plowing his fields, you're dealing with a pretty basic matter of the heart. As it turns out, Morris Wildermuth can be offered as proof of this, too. I discussed zero tillage with him one afternoon in Owen Ingram's office, and he told me, "It's just a 180-degree turn from what we're used to, and to get people psychologically prepared to do that, it's gonna be a big step." Even the less drastic forms of conservation tillage can be hard to swallow, Wildermuth said. "A lot of the conservation tillage that is started in the fall is defeated in the spring. In the fall of the year, instead of moldboard plowing, some of these farmers will come in with a chisel plow—and it looks trashy, you know, it just looks terrible. So when spring comes they'll come and hit it with a disk and just pulverize that trash, where it doesn't look like they've done any conservation tillage whatsoever. They have defeated their purpose. Once you do that, you might as well go

ahead and moldboard plow it and be done with it." He grinned sheepishly. "I'm guilty of that, too, though I may not do it as much as some of my neighbors."

Morris Wildermuth is a conservation leader in Tazewell County, the board chairman of the local Soil and Water Conservation District. More than most farmers, he knows the seriousness of the Corn Belt's erosion problem; he knows that conservation tillage is the only real hope of solving it, and he hopes that farmers will take control of the situation before the government takes control of them. But sometimes even he looks out on a field of ugly brown trash and remembers what farmland is *supposed* to look like, all black and smooth and scored with stripes, and he feels fear, or revulsion—or something—and sometimes even he can't help himself, he just has to jump on his tractor and go out there and cut that vile, festering stuff to ribbons.

That's the sort of thing that makes Owen Ingram's job interesting, and he seems the right sort of man for it. A large, affable fellow of fifty-four, he

has worked for the Soil Conservation Service for nearly thirty years, and he has been stationed in Tazewell County, where his father worked for the local Farm Bureau, since 1960. The farmers know him and accept him. More important, perhaps, he is an easygoing man, and a patient one. Standing one day near a zero-tilled cornfield (one of the handful he can count in his county of 1,400 farms), he told me, "Farmers are an independent lot. I think that's one of the reasons they farm. And the greatest innovation ever to hit farming was hybrid corn. What did it take to make hybrid corn an accepted practice—*fifteen years*? It cost nothing but a little seed! Didn't change anything else! . . . And it took fifteen years to become an accepted practice. Anything else we do is far more drastic than that, and yet we're gettin' acceptance on this zero till at a pretty darn rapid rate."

—Michael Lenehan

Michael Lenehan is a freelance writer based in Chicago. His article "The Last of the Pure Baseball Men" appeared in the August Atlantic.



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60% of its synthetic rubber, 50% of its malleable iron, and 25% of its glass into the cars and trucks that America wants and needs. And it will have invested more than \$70 billion by 1985 to give us automobiles that deliver unsurpassed performance, efficiency, and reliability. That ranks as the largest privately funded investment program in history, dwarfing the Alaskan pipeline and even the government's Apollo program.

America's top two corporate spenders on research and development last year were both automotive companies. Their combined R&D outlays approached \$4 billion.

The industry is waging an uphill battle against the ravaging effects of a slow economy, high interest rates, a tangle of government regulations, foreign competition, high labor costs, and prices spouting at the pump. Rather than retreat, it's determined to march on.

The X-body was followed this year by the K and the J, the Escort and the Lynx. A phalanx of technological innovations included electronically controlled engines; new applications for plastics, aluminum, high-strength steel, and magnesium; new automotive primers and paints; and new aerodynamic designs.

All this translates into more performance for the buck, more miles per gallon, and more quality and reliability for consumers.

So next time somebody tells you about his foreign make, tell him to get a horse.

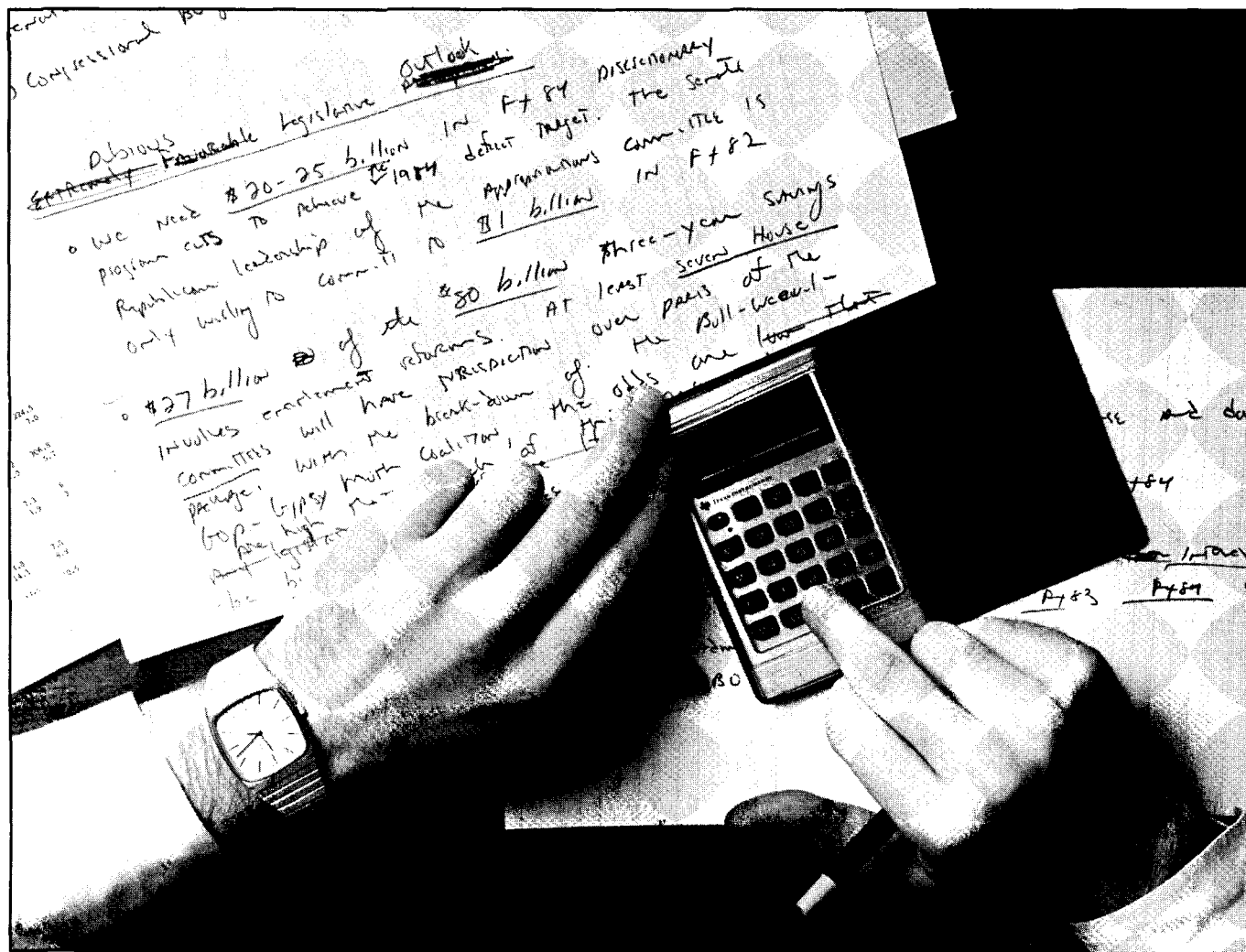
Or a pony if he prefers the economy model.



"None of us really understands what's going on with all these numbers."

THE EDUCATION OF DAVID STOCKMAN

BY WILLIAM GREIDER



I. HOW THE WORLD WORKS

GENERALLY, HE HAD NO TIME FOR IDLE SENTIMENTALITY, but David A. Stockman indulged himself for a moment as he and I approached the farmhouse in western Michigan where Stockman was reared. With feeling, he described a youthful world of hard work, variety, and manageable challenges. "It's something that's disappearing now, the working family farm," Stockman observed. "We had a little of everything—an acre of strawberries, an acre of peaches, a field of corn, fifteen cows. We did everything."

A light snow had fallen the day before, dusting the

fields and orchards with white, which softened the dour outline of the Stockman brick farmhouse. It was built seventy years ago by Stockman's maternal grandfather, who also planted the silver birches that ring the house. He was county treasurer of Berrien County for twenty years, and his reputation in local politics was an asset for his grandson.

The farm has changed since Stockman's boyhood; it is more specialized. The bright-red outbuildings behind the house include a wooden barn where livestock was once kept, a chicken coop also no longer in use, a garage, and a large metal-sided building, where the heavy equipment—in particular, a mechanical grape picker—is stored.

Grapes are now the principal crop that Allen Stockman, David's father, produces. He earns additional income by leasing out the grape picker. The farm is a small but authentic example of the entrepreneurial capitalism that David Stockman so admires.

As the car approached the house, Stockman's attention was diverted by a minor anomaly in the idyllic rural landscape: two tennis courts. They seemed out of place, alone, amidst the snow-covered fields at an intersection next to the Stockman farm. Stockman hastened to explain that, despite appearances, these were not his family's private tennis courts. They belonged to the township. Royalton Township (of which Al Stockman was treasurer) had received, like all other local units of government, its portion of the federal revenue-sharing funds, and this was how the trustees had decided to spend part of the money from Washington. "It's all right, I suppose," Stockman said amiably, "but these people would never have taxed themselves to build that. Not these tight-fisted taxpayers! As long as someone is giving them the money, sure, they are willing to spend it. But they would never have used their own money."

Stockman's contempt was directed not at the local citizens who had spent the money but at the people in Washington who had sent it. And soon he would be in a position to do something about them. This winter weekend was a final brief holiday with his parents; in a few weeks he would become director of the Office of Management and Budget in the new administration in Washington. Technically, Stockman was still the U.S. congressman from Michigan's Fourth District, but his mind and exceptional energy were already concentrated on running OMB, a small but awesomely complicated power center in the federal government, through which a President attempts to monitor all of the other federal bureaucracies.

Stockman carried with him a big black binder enclosing a "Current Services Budget," which listed every federal program and its current cost projections. He hoped to memorize the names of 500 to 1,000 program titles and major accounts by the time he was sworn in—an objective that seemed reasonable to him, since he already knew many of the budget details. During four years in Congress, Stockman had made himself a leading conservative gadfly, attacking Democratic budgets and proposing leaner alternatives. Now the President-elect was inviting him to do the same thing from within. Stockman had lobbied for the OMB job and was probably better prepared for it, despite his youthfulness, than most of his predecessors.

He was thirty-four years old and looked younger. His shaggy hair was streaked with gray, and yet he seemed like a gawky collegian, with unstylish glasses and a

prominent Adam's apple. In the corridors of the Capitol, where all ambitious staff aides scurried about in serious blue suits, Representative Stockman wore the same uniform, and was frequently mistaken for one of them.

Inside the farmhouse, the family greetings were casual and restrained. His parents and his brothers and in-laws did not seem overly impressed by the prospect that the eldest son would soon occupy one of the most powerful positions of government. Opening presents in the cluttered living room, watching the holiday football games on television, the Stockmans seemed a friendly, restrained, classic Protestant farm family of the Middle West, conservative and striving. As sometimes happens in those families, however, the energy and ambition seemed to have been concentrated disproportionately in one child, David, perhaps at the expense of the others. His mother, Carol, a big-boned woman with metallic blond hair, was the family organizer, an active committee member in local Republican politics, and the one who made David work for A's in school. In political debate, David Stockman was capable of dazzling opponents with words; his brothers seemed shy and taciturn in his presence. One brother worked as a county corrections officer in Michigan. Another, after looking on Capitol Hill, found a job in an employment agency. A third, who had that distant look of a sixties child grown older, did day labor, odd jobs. His sister was trained as an educator and worked as a consultant to manpower-training programs in Missouri that were financed by the federal government. "She believes in what she's doing and I don't quarrel with it," Stockman said. "Basically, there are gobs of this money out there. CETA grants have to do evaluation and career planning and so forth. What does it amount to? Somebody rents a room in a Marriott Hotel somewhere and my sister comes in and talks to them. I think Marriott may get more out of it than anyone else. That's part of what we're trying to get at, and it's layered all over the government."

While David Stockman would speak passionately against the government in Washington and its self-aggrandizing habits, there was this small irony about his siblings and himself: most of them worked for government in one way or another—protected from the dynamic risk-taking of the private economy. Stockman himself had never had any employer other than the federal government, but the adventure in his career lay in challenging it. Or, more precisely, in challenging the "permanent government" that modern liberalism had spawned.

By that phrase, Stockman and other conservatives meant not only the layers and layers of federal bureaucrats and liberal politicians who sustained open-ended growth of the central government but also the less visible infrastructure of private interests that fed off of it and prospered—the law firms and lobbyists and trade associations in rows of shining office buildings along K Street in Washington; the consulting firms and contractors; the

constituencies of special interests, from schoolteachers to construction workers to failing businesses and multinational giants, all of whom came to Washington for money and for legal protection against the perils of free competition.

While ideology would guide Stockman in his new job, he would be confronted with a large and tangible political problem: how to resolve the three-sided dilemma created by Ronald Reagan's contradictory campaign promises. In private, Stockman agreed that his former congressional mentor, John Anderson, running as an independent candidate for President in 1980, had asked the right question: How is it possible to raise defense spending, cut income taxes, and balance the budget, all at the same time? Anderson had taunted Reagan with that question, again and again, and most conventional political thinkers, from orthodox Republican to Keynesian liberal, agreed with Anderson that it could not be done.

But Stockman was confident, even cocky, that he and some of his fellow conservatives had the answer. It was a theory of economics—the supply-side theory—that promised an end to the twin aggravations of the 1970s: high inflation and stagnant growth in America's productivity. "We've got to figure out a way to make John Anderson's question fit into a plausible policy path over the next three years," Stockman said. "Actually, it isn't all that hard to do."

The supply-side approach, which Stockman had only lately embraced, assumed, first of all, that dramatic action by the new President, especially the commitment to a three-year reduction of the income tax, coupled with tight monetary control, would signal investors that a new era was dawning, that the growth of government would be displaced by the robust growth of the private sector. If economic behavior in a climate of high inflation is primarily based on expectations about the future value of money, then swift and dramatic action by the President could reverse the gloomy assumptions in the disordered financial markets. As inflation abated, interest rates dropped, and productive employment grew, those marketplace developments would, in turn, help Stockman balance the federal budget.

"The whole thing is premised on faith," Stockman explained. "On a belief about how the world works." As he prepared the script in his mind, his natural optimism led to bullish forecasts, which were even more robust than the Reagan Administration's public promises. "The inflation premium melts away like the morning mist," Stockman predicted. "It could be cut in half in a very short period of time if the policy is credible. That sets off adjustments and changes in perception that cascade through the economy. You have a bull market in '81, after April, of historic proportions."

How the world works. It was a favorite phrase of Stockman's, frequently invoked in conversation to indicate a coherent view of things, an ideology that was

whole and consistent. Stockman took ideology seriously, and this distinguished him from other bright, ambitious politicians who were content to deal with public questions one at a time, without imposing a consistent philosophical framework upon them.

In 1964, when he went off to Michigan State, having played quarterback in high school and participated in Future Farmers of America, Stockman assumed that he would be a farmer, like his father. His political views were orthodox Republican, derived from his mother, and from his reading of *The Conscience of a Conservative*, by Senator Barry Goldwater. "In my first three months, I went through an absolute clash of cultures," Stockman recalls. "My first professor was an atheist and socialist from Brooklyn, and within three months I think he destroyed everything I believed in, from God to the flag." When the Vietnam War became the focus of campus radicalism, Stockman became a leader, and read Herbert Marcuse, C. Wright Mills, and Paul Goodman's critiques of American society. "I became a radical, not in the hardcore sense but in the more casual sense that nearly everybody was on campus in those days. Naturally, as a good Methodist, I looked for the Methodist youth center, which became the anti-war center, because that was the socially conscious thing to do. I was still enough of a farm boy to believe that revolution was God's work."

After graduation, he enrolled at Harvard Divinity School, thinking he might become a great moral philosopher in the tradition of Christian social activists. (He was perhaps also thinking, like so many other students of the time, that divinity school would extend his deferment from the draft.) At Michigan State, he had dropped the study of agriculture and moved into the humanities. At Harvard, he dropped theology and moved into the social sciences (though he never received training as an economist). "I guess I always had a strong intellectual bent, so I needed a strong theory of how the world worked."

When he found the divinity courses uninspiring, he began taking political science and history—studying under neo-conservatives such as James Q. Wilson, Nathan Glazer, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan—and discovered, he said, "that it was possible to have a sophisticated view of the world without being a Marxist." In a Harvard seminar, he made a connection with John Anderson, who was looking for a bright young idea man to help prepare issues for the House Republican Conference, which Anderson chaired. The Illinois congressman was moving gradually leftward in his views; Stockman was continuing his intellectual search in the opposite direction.

Stockman's congressional district was composed of small towns and countryside, a world that worked quite well without Washington, in his view. After dinner at the farm that day, we took a driving tour of the area. The government's good works were everywhere—a new sewer system in Bridgman, a modern municipal building in Stevensville—but Stockman belittled them as "pork bar-

rel." Stockman's district was overwhelmingly rural and Republican, but he saw it as a fair representation of America.

Indeed, as a congressman, Stockman himself had worked hard to make certain that his Fourth District constituents exploited the system. His office maintained a computerized alert system for grants and loans from the myriad agencies, to make certain that no opportunities were missed. "I went around and cut all the ribbons and they never knew I voted against the damn programs," he said.

Still, more than most other politicians, Stockman was known for standing by his ideological principles, not undermining them. When Congress voted its bail-out financing to rescue Chrysler from bankruptcy, Stockman was the only Michigan representative to oppose it, even though a large town in his district, St. Joseph, would be hurt. The town's largest employer, St. Joe's Auto Specialties, was a Chrysler supplier, and its factory was laying off workers. Its owners were among Stockman's earliest and largest contributors when he first ran for Congress, in 1976. Still, he opposed the bail-out. "Some of them were a little miffed at me and others applauded. I only had one or two argue strenuously with me. They're probably more derogatory behind my back."

Stockman felt protected from local pressures, in a way that most members of Congress do not—partly by the Republicanism of the district but also by the consistency of his ideology. Since he had a clear, strong view of what government ought and ought not to do, he found it easier to resist claims that seemed illegitimate, no matter who their sponsors might be. "Too many politicians are intimidated by the squeaking wheel, in my judgment. Regardless of their ideological viewpoint, they're able to incorporate the squeaking wheel into their general position. If the proposal is pro-business, they call it conservative. If they're from Nebraska, it's pro-farmer. It's whatever serves the constituencies."

This was the core of his complaint against the modern liberalism launched by Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal. He did not quarrel with the need for basic social-welfare programs, such as unemployment insurance or Social Security; he agreed that the government must regulate private enterprise to protect general health and safety. But liberal politics in its later stages had lost the ability to judge claims, and so yielded to all of them, Stockman thought, creating what he describes as "constituency-based choice-making," which could no longer address larger national interests, including fiscal control. As Stockman saw it, this process did not ameliorate social inequities; it created new ones by yielding to powerful interest groups at the expense of everyone else. "What happens is the politicization of the society. All decisions flow to the center. Once we decide to allocate credit to certain activities—and we're doing that on a massive scale—or to allocate the capital for energy development,

the levels of competency and morality fall. Then the outcomes in society begin to look more and more like the work of brute muscle. The other thing it does is destroy ideas. Once things are allocated by political muscle, by regional claims, there are no longer idea-based agendas."

Across the river from St. Joe's, Stockman drove through the deserted Main Street of Benton Harbor, his favorite example of failed liberalism. Once it had been a prosperous commercial center, but now most of its stores and buildings were boarded up and vacant except for an occasional storefront church or social-service agency. As highways and suburban shopping centers pulled away commerce, the downtown collapsed, whites moved, and the city became predominantly black and overwhelmingly poor. The federal government's various efforts to revive Benton Harbor had quite visibly failed.

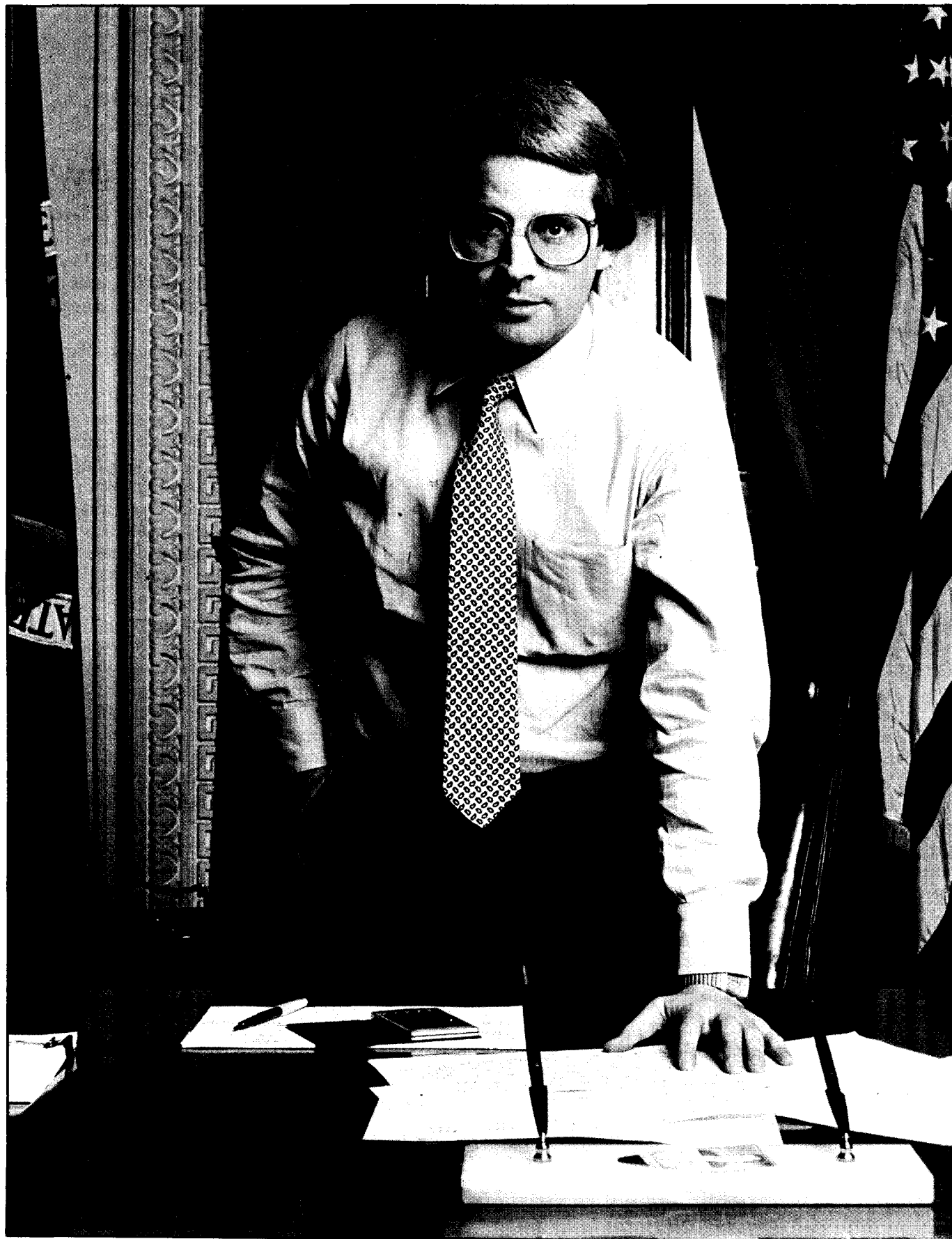
"When you have powerful underlying demographic and economic forces at work, federal intervention efforts designed to reverse the tide turn out to have rather anemic effects," Stockman said, surveying the dilapidated storefronts. "I wouldn't be surprised if \$100 million had been spent here in the last twenty years. Urban renewal, CETA, model cities, they've had everything. And the results? No impact whatever."

The drastic failure seemed to please him, for it confirmed his view of how the world works. As budget director, he intended to proceed against many of the programs that fed money to the poor blacks of Benton Harbor, morally confident because he *knew* from personal observation that the federal revitalization money did not deliver what such programs promised. But he would also go after the Economic Development Administration (EDA) grants for the comfortable towns and the Farmers Home Administration loans for communities that could pay for their own sewers and the subsidized credit for farmers and business—the federal guarantees for economic interests that ought to take their own risks. He was confident of his theory, because, in terms of the Michigan countryside where he grew up, he saw it as equitable and fundamentally moral.

"We are interested in curtailing weak claims rather than weak clients," he promised. "The fear of the liberal remnant is that we will only attack weak clients. We have to show that we are willing to attack powerful clients with weak claims. I think that's critical to our success—both political and economic success."

II. A RADICAL IN POWER

THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE INAUGURATION, STOCKMAN and his transition team of a dozen or so people were already established at the OMB office in the Old Executive Office Building. When his appointment as budget director first seemed likely, he had agreed to meet with me from time to time and relate, off the record, his private account of the great political struggle ahead. The



DAVID STOCKMAN

particulars of these conversations were not to be reported until later, after the season's battles were over, but a cynic familiar with how Washington works would understand that the arrangement had obvious symbiotic value. As an assistant managing editor at *The Washington Post*, I benefited from an informed view of policy discussions of the new administration; Stockman, a student of history, was contributing to history's record and perhaps influencing its conclusions. For him, our meetings were another channel—among many he used—to the press. The older generation of orthodox Republicans distrusted the press; Stockman was one of the younger “new” conservatives who cultivated contacts with columnists and reporters, who saw the news media as another useful tool in political combat. “We believe our ideas have intellectual respectability, and we think the press will recognize that,” he said. “The traditional Republicans probably sensed, even if they didn't know it, that their ideas lacked intellectual respectability.”

In any case, for the eight months that followed, Stockman kept the agreement, and our regular conversations, over breakfast at the Hay-Adams, provided the basis of the account that follows.

In early January, Stockman and his staff were assembling dozens of position papers on program reductions and studying the internal forecasts for the federal budget and the national economy. The initial figures were frightening—“absolutely shocking,” he confided—yet he seemed oddly exhilarated by the bad news, and was bubbling with new plans for coping with these horrendous numbers. An OMB computer, programmed as a model of the nation's economic behavior, was instructed to estimate the impact of Reagan's program on the federal budget. It predicted that if the new President went ahead with his promised three-year tax reduction and his increase in defense spending, the Reagan Administration would be faced with a series of federal deficits without precedent in peacetime—ranging from \$82 billion in 1982 to \$116 billion in 1984. Even Stockman blinked. If those were the numbers included in President Reagan's first budget message, the following month, the financial markets that Stockman sought to reassure would instead be panicked. Interest rates, already high, would go higher; the expectation of long-term inflation would be confirmed.

Stockman saw opportunity in these shocking projections. “All the conventional estimates just wind up as mud,” he said. “As absurdities. What they basically say, to boil it down, is that the world doesn't work.”

Stockman set about doing two things. First, he changed the OMB computer. Assisted by like-minded supply-side economists, the new team discarded orthodox premises of how the economy would behave. Instead of a continuing double-digit inflation, the new computer model assumed a swift decline in prices and interest rates. Instead of the continuing pattern of slow economic

growth, the new model was based on a dramatic surge in the nation's productivity. New investment, new jobs, and growing profits—and Stockman's historic bull market. “It's based on valid economic analysis,” he said, “but it's the inverse of the last four years. When we go public, this is going to set off a wide-open debate on how the economy works, a great battle over the conventional theories of economic performance.”

The original apostles of supply-side, particularly Representative Jack Kemp, of New York, and the economist Arthur B. Laffer, dismissed budget-cutting as inconsequential to the economic problems, but Stockman was trying to fuse new theory and old. “Laffer sold us a bill of goods,” he said, then corrected his words: “Laffer wasn't wrong—he didn't go far enough.”

The great debate never quite took hold in the dimensions that Stockman had anticipated, but the Reagan Administration's economic projections did become the source of continuing controversy. In defense of their counter-theories, Stockman and his associates would argue, correctly, that conventional forecasts, particularly by the Council of Economic Advisers in the preceding administration, had been consistently wrong in the past. His critics would contend that the supply-side premises were based upon wishful thinking, not sound economic analysis.

But, second, Stockman used the appalling deficit projections as a valuable talking point in the policy discussions that were under way with the President and his principal advisers. Nobody in that group was the least bit hesitant about cutting federal programs, but Reagan had campaigned on the vague and painless theme that eliminating “waste, fraud, and mismanagement” would be sufficient to balance the accounts. Now, as Stockman put it, “the idea is to try to get beyond the waste, fraud, and mismanagement modality and begin to confront the real dimensions of budget reduction.” On the first Wednesday in January, Stockman had two hours on the President-elect's schedule to describe the “dire shape” of the federal budget; for starters, the new administration would have to go for a budget reduction in the neighborhood of \$40 billion. “Do you have any idea what \$40 billion means?” he said. “It means I've got to cut the highway program. It means I've got to cut milk-price supports. And Social Security student benefits. And education and student loans. And manpower training and housing. It means I've got to shut down the synfuels program and a lot of other programs. The idea is to show the magnitude of the budget deficit and some suggestion of the political problems.”

How much pain was the new President willing to impose? How many sacred cows would he challenge at once? Stockman was still feeling out the commitment at the White House, aware that Reagan's philosophical commitment to shrinking the federal government would be weighed against political risks.

Stockman was impressed by the ease with which the President-elect accepted the broad objective: find \$40 billion in cuts in a federal budget running well beyond \$700 billion. But, despite the multitude of expenditures, the proliferation of programs and grants, Stockman knew the exercise was not as easy as it might sound.

Consider the budget in simple terms, as a federal dollar representing the entire \$700 billion. The most important function of the federal government is mailing checks to citizens—Social Security checks to the elderly, pension checks to retired soldiers and civil servants, reimbursement checks for hospitals and doctors who provide medical care for the aged and the poor, welfare checks for the dependent, veterans checks to pensioners. Such disbursements consume forty-eight cents of the dollar.

Another twenty-five cents goes to the Pentagon, for national defense. Stockman knew that this share would be rising in the next four years, not shrinking, perhaps becoming as high as thirty cents. Another ten cents was consumed by interest payments on the national debt, which was fast approaching a trillion dollars.

That left seventeen cents for everything else that Washington does. The FBI and the national parks, the county agents and the Foreign Service and the Weather Bureau—all the traditional operations of government—consumed only nine cents of the dollar. The remaining eight cents provided all of the grants to state and local governments, for aiding handicapped children or building highways or installing tennis courts next to Al Stockman's farm. One might denounce particular programs as wasteful, as unnecessary and ineffective, even crazy, but David Stockman knew that he could not escape these basic dimensions of federal spending.

As he and his staff went looking for the \$40 billion, they found that most of it would have to be taken from the seventeen cents that covered government operations and grants-in-aid. Defense was already off-limits. Next Ronald Reagan laid down another condition for the budget-cutting: the main benefit programs of Social Security, Medicare, veterans' checks, railroad retirement pensions, welfare for the disabled—the so-called “social safety net” that Reagan had promised not to touch—were to be exempt from the budget cuts. In effect, he was declaring that Stockman could not tamper with three fourths of the forty-eight cents devoted to transfer payments.

No President had balanced the budget in the past twelve years. Still, Stockman thought it could be done, by 1984, if the Reagan Administration adhered to the principle of equity, cutting weak claims, not merely weak clients, and if it shocked the system sufficiently to create a new political climate. He still believed that it was not a question of numbers. “It boils down to a political question, not of budget policy or economic policy, but whether we can change the habits of the political system.”

THE STRUGGLE BEGAN IN PRIVATE, WITH RONALD Reagan's Cabinet. By inaugural week, Stockman's staff had assembled fifty or sixty policy papers outlining major cuts and alterations, and, aiming at the target of \$40 billion, Stockman was anxious to win fast approval for them, before the new Cabinet officers were fully familiar with their departments and prepared to defend their bureaucracies. During that first week, the new Cabinet members had to sit through David Stockman's recital—one proposal after another outlining drastic reductions in their programs. Brief discussion was followed by presidential approval. “I have a little nervousness about the heavy-handedness with which I am being forced to act,” Stockman conceded. “It's not that I wouldn't want to give the decision papers to the Cabinet members ahead of time so they could look at them, it's just that we're getting them done at eight o'clock in the morning and rushing them to the Cabinet room. . . . It doesn't work when you have to brace these Cabinet officers in front of the President with severe reductions in their agencies, because then they're in the position of having to argue against the group line. And the group line is cut, cut, cut. So that's a very awkward position for them, and you make them resentful very fast.”

Stockman proposed to White House counselor Edwin Meese an alternative approach—a budget working group, in which each Cabinet secretary could review the proposed cuts and argue against them. As the group evolved, however, with Meese, chief of staff James Baker, Treasury Secretary Donald Regan, and policy director Martin Anderson, among others, it was stacked in Stockman's favor. “Each meeting will involve only the relevant Cabinet member and his aides with four or five strong keepers of the central agenda,” Stockman explained at one point. “So on Monday, when we go into the decision on synfuels programs, it will be [Energy Secretary James B.] Edwards defending them against six guys saying that, by God, we've got to cut these back or we're not going to have a savings program that will add up.”

In general, the system worked. Stockman's agency did in a few weeks what normally consumes months; the process was made easier because the normal opposition forces had no time to marshal either their arguments or their constituents and because the President was fully in tune with Stockman. After the budget working group reached a decision, it would be taken to Reagan in the form of a memorandum, on which he could register his approval by checking a little box. “Once he checks it,” Stockman said, “I put that in my safe and I go ahead and I don't let it come back up again.”

The check marks were given to changes in twelve major budget entitlements and scores of smaller ones. Eliminate Social Security minimum benefits. Cap the runaway costs of Medicaid. Tighten eligibility for food stamps. Merge the trade adjustment assistance for unemployed industrial workers with standard unemploy-



WITH JONNA LYNNE CULLEN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR FOR LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AT THE OMB

ment compensation and shrink it. Cut education aid by a quarter. Cut grants for the arts and humanities in half. "Zero out" CETA and the Community Services Administration and National Consumer Cooperative Bank. And so forth. "Zero out" became a favorite phrase of Stockman's; it meant closing down a program "cold turkey," in one budget year. Stockman believed that any compromise on a program that ought to be eliminated—funding that would phase it out over several years—was merely a political ruse to keep it alive, so it might still be in existence a few years hence, when a new political climate could allow its restoration to full funding.

"I just wish that there were more hours in the day or that we didn't have to do this so fast. I have these stacks of briefing books and I've got to make decisions about specific options. . . I don't have time, trying to put this whole package together in three weeks, so you just start making snap judgments."

IN THE PRIVATE DELIBERATIONS, STOCKMAN BEGAN to encounter more resistance from Cabinet members. He was proposing to cut \$752 million from the Export-Import Bank, which provides subsidized financ-

ing for international trade—a cut of crucial symbolic importance, because of Stockman's desire for equity. Two thirds of the Ex-Im's direct loans benefit some of America's major manufacturers—Boeing, Lockheed, General Electric, Westinghouse, McDonnell Douglas, Western Electric, Combustion Engineering—and, not surprisingly, the program had a strong Republican constituency on Capitol Hill. Stockman thought the trade subsidies offended the free-market principles that all conservatives espouse—in particular, President Reagan's objective of withdrawing Washington from business decision-making. Supporters of the subsidies made a practical argument: the U.S. companies, big as they were, needed the financial subsidies to stay even against government-subsidized competition from Europe and Japan.

The counter-offensive against the cut was led by Commerce Secretary Malcolm Baldrige and U.S. Trade Representative William Brock, who argued eloquently before the budget working group for a partial restoration of Ex-Im funds. By Stockman's account, the two "fought, argued, pounded the table," and the meeting seemed headed for deadlock. "I sort of innocently asked, well, isn't there a terrible political spin on this? It's my impression that most of the money goes to a handful of

big corporations, and if we are ever caught not cutting this while we're biting deeply into the social programs, we're going to have big problems." Stockman asked if anyone at the table had any relevant data. Deputy Secretary of the Treasury Tim McNamar thereupon produced a list of Ex-Im's major beneficiaries (a list that Stockman had given him before the meeting). "So then I went into this demagogic tirade about how in the world can I cut food stamps and social services and CETA jobs and EDA jobs and you're going to tell me you can't give up one penny for Boeing?"

Stockman won that argument, for the moment. But, as with all the other issues in the budget debate, the argument was only beginning. "I've got to take something out of Boeing's hide to make this look right. . . . You can measure me on this, because I'll probably lose but I'll give it a helluva fight."

Stockman also began what was to become a continuing struggle, occasionally nasty, with the new secretary of energy. Edwards, a dentist from South Carolina, was ostensibly appointed to dismantle the Department of Energy, as Reagan had promised, but when Stockman proposed cutting the department in half, virtually eliminating the vast synthetic-fuels program launched by the Carter Administration, Edwards argued in defense. In the midst of the battle, Stockman said contemptuously, "I went over to DOE the other day and here's a whole roomful of the same old bureaucrats I've been kicking around for the last five years—advising Edwards on why we couldn't do certain things on oil decontrol that I wanted to do." The relationship did not improve as the two men got to know each other better.

But Stockman felt only sympathy for Secretary of Agriculture John Block, an Illinois farmer. The budget cuts were hitting some of Agriculture's principal subsidy programs. A billion dollars would be cut from dairy-price supports. The Farmers Home Administration loans and grants were to be sharply curtailed. The low-interest financing for rural electric cooperatives and the Tennessee Valley Authority would be modified. In the early weeks of the new administration, the peanut growers and their congressional lobby had campaigned, as they did every year, to have the new secretary of agriculture raise the price-support level for peanuts. Stockman told Block he would have to refuse—for Stockman wanted to abolish the program. "I sympathize with Jack Block," Stockman said. "I forced him into a position that makes his life miserable over there. He's on the central team, he's not a departmental player, but the parochial politics of that department are fierce." Victories over farm lobbies could be won, Stockman believed, if he kept the issues separate—attacking each commodity program in turn, and undermining urban support by cutting the food and nutrition programs. "My strategy is to come in with a farm bill that's unacceptable to the farm guys so that the whole thing begins to splinter." An early test vote on

milk-price supports seemed to confirm the strategy—the dairy farmers lobbied and lost.

THE ONLY CABINET OFFICER STOCKMAN DID NOT challenge was, of course, the secretary of defense. In the frantic preparation of the Reagan budget message, delivered in broad outline to Congress on February 18, the OMB review officers did not give even their usual scrutiny to the new budget projections from Defense. Reagan had promised to increase military spending by 7 percent a year, adjusted for inflation, and this pledge translated into the biggest peacetime arms build-up in the history of the republic—\$1.6 trillion over the next five years, which would more than double the Pentagon's annual budget while domestic spending was shrinking. Stockman acknowledged that OMB had taken only a cursory glance at the new defense budget, but he was confident that later on, when things settled down a bit, he could go back and analyze it more carefully.

In late February, months before the defense budget became a subject of Cabinet debate, Stockman privately predicted that Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger, himself a budget director during the Nixon years, would be an ally when he got around to cutting back military spending. "As soon as we get past this first phase in the process, I'm really going to go after the Pentagon. The whole question is blatant inefficiency, poor deployment of manpower, contracting idiocy, and, hell, I think that Cap's going to be a pretty good mark over there. He's not a tool of the military-industrial complex. I mean, he hasn't been steeped in its excuses and rationalizations and ideology for twenty years, and I think that he'll back off on a lot of this stuff, but you just can't challenge him head-on without your facts in line. And we're going to get our case in line and just force it through the presses."

Stockman shared the general view of the Reagan Administration that the United States needed a major build-up of its armed forces. But he also recognized that the Pentagon, as sole customer for weapons systems, subsidized the arms manufacturers in many direct ways and violated many free-market principles. "The defense budgets in the out-years won't be nearly as high as we are showing now, in my judgment. Hell, I think there's a kind of swamp of \$10 to \$20 to \$30 billion worth of waste that can be ferreted out if you really push hard."

Long before President Reagan's speech to Congress, most of the painful details of the \$41.4 billion in proposed reductions were already known to Capitol Hill and the public. In early February, preparing the political ground, Stockman started delivering his "black book" to Republican leaders and committee chairmen. He knew that once the information was circulating on the Hill, it would soon be available to the news media, and he was not at all upset by the daily storm of headlines revealing the dimensions of what lay ahead. The news conveyed, in its

drama and quantity of detail, the appropriate political message: President Reagan would not be proposing business as usual. The President had in mind what Stockman saw as "fiscal revolution."

But it was not generally understood that the new budget director had already lost a major component of his revolution—another set of proposals, which he called "Chapter II," that was not sent to Capitol Hill because the President had vetoed its most controversial elements.

Stockman had thought "Chapter II" would help him on two fronts: it would provide substantially increased revenues and thus help reduce the huge deficits of the next three years; but it would also mollify liberal critics complaining about the cuts in social welfare, because it was aimed primarily at tax expenditures (popularly known as "loopholes") benefiting oil and other business interests. "We have a gap which we couldn't fill even with all these budget cuts, too big a deficit," Stockman explained. "Chapter II comes out totally on the opposite of the equity question. That was part of my strategy to force acquiescence at the last minute into a lot of things you'd never see a Republican administration propose. I had a meeting this morning at the White House. The President wasn't involved, but all the other key senior people were. We brought a program of additional tax savings that don't touch any social programs. But they touch tax expenditures." Stockman hesitated to discuss details, for the package was politically sensitive, but it included elimination of the oil-depletion allowance; an attack on tax-exempt industrial-development bonds; user fees for owners of private airplanes and barges; a potential ceiling on home-mortgage deductions (which Stockman called a "mansion cap," since it would affect only the wealthy); some defense reductions; and other items, ten in all. Total additional savings: somewhere in the neighborhood of \$20 billion. Stockman was proud of "Chapter II" and also very nervous about it, because, while liberal Democrats might applaud the closing of "loopholes" that they had attacked for years, powerful lobbies—in Congress and business—would mobilize against it.

Did President Reagan approve? "If there's a consensus on it, he's not going to buck it, probably."

Two weeks later, Stockman cheerfully explained that the President had rejected his "tax-expenditures" savings. The "Chapter II" issues had seemed crucial to Stockman when he was preparing them, but he dismissed them as inconsequential now that he had lost. "Those were more like ornaments I was thinking of on the tax side," he insisted. "I call them equity ornaments. They're not really too good. They're not essential to the economics of the thing."

The President was willing to propose user fees for aircraft, private boats, and barges, but turned down the proposal to eliminate the oil-depletion allowance. "The President has a very clear philosophy," Stockman ex-

plained. "A lot of people criticize him for being short on the details, but he knows when something's wrong. He just jumped all over my tax proposals."

Stockman dropped other proposals. Nevertheless, he was buoyant. The reactions from Capitol Hill were clamorous, as expected, but the budget director was more impressed by the silences, the stutter and hesitation of the myriad interest groups. Stockman was becoming a favorite caricature for newspaper cartoonists—the grim reaper of the Reagan Administration, the Republican Robespierre—but in his many sessions on the Hill he sensed confusion and caution on the other side.

"There are more and more guys coming around to our side," he reported. "What's happening is that the plan is so sweeping and it covers all the bases sufficiently, so that it's like a magnifying glass that reveals everybody's pores. . . In the past, people could easily get votes for their projects or their interests by saying, well, if they would cut food stamps and CETA jobs and two or three other things, then maybe we would go along with it, but they are just picking on my program. But, now, everybody perceives that everybody's sacred cows are being cut. If that's what it takes, so be it. The parochial player will not be the norm, I think. For a while."

III. THE MAGIC ASTERISK

ON CAPITOL HILL, IDEOLOGICAL CONSISTENCY IS NOT a highly ranked virtue but its absence is useful grounds for scolding the opposition. David Stockman endured considerable needling when his budget appeared, revealing that many programs that he had opposed as a congressman had survived. The most glaring was the fast-breeder nuclear reactor at Clinch River, Tennessee. Why hadn't Stockman cut the nuclear subsidy that he had so long criticized? The answer was Senator Howard Baker, of Tennessee, majority leader. "I didn't have to get rolled," Stockman said, "I just got out of the way. It just wasn't worth fighting. This package will go nowhere without Baker, and Clinch River is just life or death to Baker. A very poor reason, I know."

Consistency, he knew, was an important asset in the new environment. The package of budget cuts would be swiftly picked apart if members of Congress perceived that they could save their pet programs, one by one, from the general reductions. "All those guys are looking for ways out," he said. "If they can detect an alleged pattern of preferential treatment for somebody else or discriminatory treatment between rural and urban interests or between farm interests and industrial interests, they can concoct a case for theirs."

Even by Washington standards, where overachieving young people with excessive adrenalin are commonplace, Stockman was busy. Back and forth, back and forth he went, from his vast office at the Old Executive Office Building, with its classic high ceilings and its fireplace,



A CONVERSATION WITH SENATOR ROBERT DOLE

to the cloakrooms and hideaway offices and hearing chambers of the Capitol, to the West Wing of the White House. Usually, he carried an impossible stack of books and papers under his arm, like a harried high school student who has not been given a locker. He promised friends he would relax—take a day off, or at least sleep later than 5 A.M., when he usually arose to read policy papers before breakfast. But he did not relax easily. What was social life compared with the thrill of reshaping the federal establishment?

In the early skirmishing on Capitol Hill, Stockman actually proposed a tight control system: Senator Baker and the House Republican leader, Robert Michel, of Illinois, would be empowered to clear all budget trades on particular programs—and no one else, not even the highest White House advisers, could negotiate any deals. “If you have multiple channels for deals to be cut and retreats to be made,” Stockman explained, “then it will be possible for everybody to start side-dooring me, going in to see Meese, who doesn’t understand the policy background, and making the case, or [James] Baker making a deal with a subcommittee chairman.” Neither the White House nor the congressional leadership liked his idea, and it was soon buried.

By March, however, Stockman could see the status quo yielding to the shock of the Reagan agenda. In dozens of meetings and hearings, public and private, Stockman perceived that it was now inappropriate for a senator or a congressman to plead for his special interests, at least in front of other members with other interests. At one caucus, a Tennessee Republican began to lecture him on the reduced financing for TVA; other Republicans scolded him. Stockman cut public-works funding for the Red River project in Louisiana, which he knew would arouse Russell Long, former chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. Long appealed personally at the White House, and Reagan stood firm.

One by one, small signals such as these began to change Stockman’s estimate of the political struggle. He began to believe that the Reagan budget package, despite its scale, perhaps because of its scale, could survive in Congress. With skillful tactics by political managers, with appropriate public drama provided by the President, the relentless growth rate of the federal budget, a permanent reality of Washington for twenty years, could actually be contained.

Stockman’s analysis was borne out a few weeks later, in early April, when the Senate adopted its first budget-

cutting measures, 88-10, a package close enough to the administration's proposals to convince Stockman of the vulnerability of "constituency-based" politics. "That could well be a turning point in this whole process," Stockman said afterward.

Still, Stockman was even more impressed by the performance of the new Republican majority in the Senate. After a week of voting down amendments to restore funds for various programs—"voting against every motherhood title," as Stockman put it—moderate Republicans from the Northeast and Midwest needed some sort of political solace. Led by Senator John Chafee, of Rhode Island, the moderates proposed an amendment spreading about \$1 billion over an array of social programs, from education to home-heating assistance for the poor. Stockman had no objection. The amendment wouldn't cost much overall, and it would "take care of those people who have been good soldiers." Senator Pete Domenici, of New Mexico, the Senate budget chairman, decided, however, that the accommodation wasn't necessary, and he was right. The Chafee amendment lost.

"It was the kind of amendment that should have passed," Stockman reflected afterward. "The fact that it didn't win tells me that the political logic has changed."

Not entirely, however. While the Senate majority was rejecting additional money for the coalition of social programs, it was also tinkering with an important item in Stockman's balance of equitable cuts—the Export-Import Bank. The great multinational industrial firms that received the trade subsidies from Ex-Im were already at work, arguing that U.S. sales abroad and jobs at home would suffer without the Ex-Im loans and guarantees. The Republicans, led by Senator Nancy Kassebaum, of Kansas, where Boeing is a major employer, voted to restore \$250 million to the Ex-Im budget. Later, the House raised the figure even higher, with little resistance from the White House.

"We weren't really closely in control," Stockman explained. "The mark-up went so fast, and those amendments came out of the woodwork, and we weren't prepared to deal with it." Stockman seemed nonchalant about his defeat. The principle of cutting the Ex-Im's corporate subsidies, which had seemed so important to him in January, was now regarded as a minor blemish on the Senate victory. "It did open a little breach that is troublesome," he conceded.

The vulnerability of Stockman's ideology was always that the politics of winning would overwhelm the philosophical premises. But after the Senate victory, Stockman devoted his energy to the tactical questions—winning again in the House of Representatives, which was controlled by the Democrats. "This is pure politics," he said. "It's a question of whether the President can prevail on the floor of the House, because if he can't, then the committee chairmen know they have license to do anything they want."

Stockman watched with admiration as his principal intellectual rival, Jim Jones, the Democratic chairman of the House Budget Committee, attempted to fashion a budget resolution that would hold the Democratic majority together. The budget director calculated that Jones had an impossible task, but he could see that the Oklahoma congressman was going to come closer than he had expected. The Democrats, by Stockman's analysis, were really three groups: the old-line liberal faithful, who would follow the party leadership and defend against any or all budget cuts; a middle group, including Jones and other younger members, who recognized that federal deficits were out of control and were willing to confront the problem (Stockman referred to them as "the progressives"); and, finally, the "boll weevils," the thirty-eight southerners who were pulled toward Reagan both in conservative philosophy and by the politics of their home districts, which had voted overwhelmingly for the President. Jones was drawing up a resolution that would restore some funds to social programs, to keep the liberals happy; that projected a smaller deficit than Stockman's, to appear more responsible in fiscal terms; and that did not touch the defense budget, which would offend the southerners.

Artful as it was, the Jones resolution was, according to Stockman, a series of gimmicks: economic estimates and accounting tricks. "Political numbers," he called them. But Stockman was not critical of Jones for these budget ploys, because he cheerfully conceded that the administration's own budget numbers were constructed on similar shaky premises, mixing cuts from the original 1981 budget left by Jimmy Carter with new baseline projections from the Congressional Budget Office in a way that, fundamentally, did not add up. The budget politics of 1981, which produced such clear and dramatic rhetoric from both sides, was, in fact, based upon a bewildering set of numbers that confused even those, like Stockman, who produced them.

"None of us really understands what's going on with all these numbers," Stockman confessed at one point. "You've got so many different budgets out and so many different baselines and such complexity now in the interactive parts of the budget between policy action and the economic environment and all the internal mysteries of the budget, and there are a lot of them. People are getting from A to B and it's not clear how they are getting there. It's not clear how we got there, and it's not clear how Jones is going to get there."

These "internal mysteries" of the budget process were not dwelt upon by either side, for there was no point in confusing the clear lines of political debate with a much deeper and unanswerable question: Does anyone truly understand, much less control, the dynamics of the federal budget intertwined with the mysteries of the national economy? Stockman pondered this question occasionally, but since there was no obvious remedy, no intellectual

construct available that would make sense of this anarchical universe, he was compelled to shrug at the mystery and move ahead. "I'm beginning to believe that history is a lot shakier than I ever thought it was," he said, in a reflective moment. "In other words, I think there are more random elements, less determinism and more discretion, in the course of history than I ever believed before. Because I can see it."

The "random elements" were working in Stockman's behalf in the House of Representatives. He had a good fix on what Jones would produce as the Democratic alternative, in part because he had a spy in the Democratic meetings—Phil Gramm, of Texas, a like-minded conservative and friend who agreed to co-sponsor the administration's substitute resolution. Did Jones know that one of his Democratic committee members was really on the other side? "No," said Stockman. "That's how I know what's in Jones's budget."

Stockman was also dealing with the recognized leaders of the "boll weevils." He thought that the southerners could be won to the President's side with a minimum of trading, but he was prepared to trade. He agreed with G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery, chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee and a genuine leader among the southern Democrats, to acquiesce in the restoration of \$350 to \$400 million for staffing at veterans' hospitals. Once Montgomery announced he was with the President, it would be a respectable position, which other southerners could embrace, Stockman felt. Still, he was confident that he could defend the agenda against general trading for votes.

IN POLITICAL TERMS, STOCKMAN'S ANALYSIS WAS sound. The Reagan program was moving toward a series of dramatic victories in Congress. Beyond the brilliant tactical maneuvering, however, and concealed by the public victories, Stockman was privately staring at another reality—a gloomy portent that the economic theory behind the President's program wasn't working. While it was winning in the political arena, the plan was losing on Wall Street. The financial markets, which Stockman had thought would be reassured by the new President's bold actions, and which were supposed to launch a historic "bull market" in April, failed to respond in accordance with Stockman's script. The markets not only failed to rally, they went into a new decline. Interest rates started up again; the bond market slumped. The annual inflation rate, it was true, was declining, dropping below double digits, but even Stockman acknowledged that this was owing to "good luck" with grain harvests and world oil supplies, not to Reaganomics. Investment analysts, however, were looking closely at the Stockman budget figures, looking beyond the storm of political debate and the President's winning style, and what they saw were enormous deficits ahead—

the same numbers that had shocked David Stockman when he came into office in January. Henry Kaufman, of Salomon Brothers, one of the preeminent prophets of Wall Street, delivered a sobering speech that, in the cautious language of financiers, said the same thing that John Anderson had said in 1980: cutting taxes and pumping up the defense budget would produce not balanced budgets but inflationary deficits.

Was Kaufman right? Stockman agreed that he was, and conceded that his own original conception—that dramatic political action would somehow alter the marketplace expectations of continuing inflation—had been wrong. "They're concerned about the out-year budget posture, not about the near-term economic situation. The Kaufmans don't dispute our diagnosis at all. They dispute our remedy. They don't think it adds up . . . I take the performance of the bond market deadly seriously. I think it's the best measure there is. The bond markets represent worldwide psychology, worldwide perception and evaluation of what, on balance, relevant people think about what we're doing . . . It means we're going to have to make changes . . . I wouldn't say we are losing. We're still not winning. We're not winning."

THE UNDERLYING PROBLEM OF THE DEFICITS FIRST surfaced, to Stockman's embarrassment, in the Senate Budget Committee in mid-April, when committee Republicans choked on the three-year projections supplied by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office. Three Republican senators refused to vote for a long-term budget measure that predicted continuing deficits of \$60 billion, instead of a balanced budget by 1984.

Stockman thought he had taken care of embarrassing questions about future deficits with a device he referred to as the "magic asterisk." (Senator Howard Baker had dubbed it that in strategy sessions, Stockman said.) The "magic asterisk" would blithely denote all of the future deficit problems that were to be taken care of with additional budget reductions, to be announced by the President at a later date. Thus, everyone could finesse the hard questions, for now.

But, somehow or other, the Senate Budget Committee staff insisted upon putting the honest numbers in its resolution—the projected deficits of \$60 billion-plus running through 1984. That left the Republican senators staring directly at the same scary numbers that Stockman and the Wall Street analysts had already seen. The budget director blamed this brief flare-up on the frantic nature of his schedule. When he should have been holding hands with the Senate Budget Committee, he was at the other end of the Capitol, soothing Representative Delbert Latta, of Ohio, the ranking Republican in budget matters, who was pouting. Latta thought that since he was a Republican, his name should go ahead of that of Phil Gramm, a Democrat, on the budget resolution: that

it should be Latta-Gramm instead of Gramm-Latta.

After a few days of reassurances, Stockman persuaded the Republican senators to relax about the future and two weeks later they passed the resolution—without being given any concrete answers as to where he would find future cuts of such magnitude. In effect, the “magic asterisk” sufficed.

But the real problem, as Stockman conceded, was still unsolved. Indeed, pondering the reactions of financial markets, the budget director made an extraordinary confession in private: the original agenda of budget reductions, which had seemed so radical in February, was exposed by May as inadequate. The “magic asterisk” might suffice for the political debate in Congress, but it would not answer the fundamental question asked by Wall Street: How, in fact, did Ronald Reagan expect to balance the federal budget? “It’s a tentative judgment on the part of the markets and of spokesmen like Kaufman that is reversible because they haven’t seen all our cards. From the cards they’ve seen, I suppose that you can see how they draw that conclusion.”

“It means,” Stockman said, “that you have to have some recalibration in the policy. The thing was put together so fast that it probably should have been put together differently.” With mild regret, Stockman looked back at what had gone wrong:

“The defense numbers got out of control and we were doing that whole budget-cutting exercise so frenetically. In other words, you were juggling details, pushing people, and going from one session to another, trying to cut housing programs here and rural electric there, and we were doing it so fast, we didn’t know where we were ending up for sure . . . In other words, we should have designed those pieces to be more compatible. But the pieces were moving on independent tracks—the tax program, where we were going on spending, and the defense program, which was just a bunch of numbers written on a piece of paper. And it didn’t quite mesh. That’s what happened. But, you see, for about a month and a half we got away with that because of the novelty of all these budget reductions.”

Reagan’s policy-makers knew that their plan was wrong, or at least inadequate to its promised effects, but the President went ahead and conveyed the opposite impression to the American public. With the cool sincerity of an experienced television actor, Reagan appeared on network TV to rally the nation in support of the Gramm-Latta resolution, promising a new era of fiscal control and balanced budgets, when Stockman knew they still had not found the solution. This practice of offering the public eloquent reassurances despite privately held doubts was not new, of course. Every contemporary President—starting with Lyndon Johnson, in his attempt to cover up the true cost of the war in Vietnam—had been caught, sooner or later, in contradictions between promises and economic realities. The legacy was a deep popu-

lar skepticism about anything a President promised about the economy. Barely four months in office, Ronald Reagan was already adding to the legacy.

Indeed, Stockman began in May to plot what he called the “recalibration” of Reagan policy, which he hoped could be executed discreetly over the coming months to eliminate the out-year deficits for 1983 and 1984 that alarmed Wall Street—without alarming political Washington and losing control in the congressional arena. “It’s very tough, because you don’t want to end up like Carter, where you put a plan out there and then, a month into it, you visibly and unmistakably change postures. So what you have to do is solve this problem incrementally, without the appearance of reversal, and there are some ways to do that.”

Stockman saw three main areas of opportunity for closing the gap: defense, Social Security, and health costs, meaning Medicare and Medicaid. And there was a fourth: the Reagan tax cut; if it could be modified in the course of the congressional negotiations already under way, this would make for additional savings on the revenue side. The public alarm over the deficits was, to some extent, “fortuitous,” from Stockman’s viewpoint, because the Wall Street message supported the sermon that he was delivering to his fellow policy-makers at the White House: the agonies of budget reduction were only beginning, and, more to the point, the Reagan Administration could not keep its promise of balanced budgets unless it was willing to back away from its promised defense spending, its 10-10-10 tax-cut plan, and the President’s pledge to exempt from cutbacks the so-called “safety-net” programs. Stockman would deliver this speech, in different forms, all through the summer ahead, trying to create the leverage for action on those fronts, particularly on defense. He later explained his strategy:

“I put together a list of twenty social programs that have to be zeroed out completely, like Job Corps, Head Start, women and children’s feeding programs, on and on. And another twenty-five that have to be cut by 50 percent: general revenue sharing, CETA manpower training, etcetera, etcetera. And then huge bites that would have to be taken out of Social Security. I mean really fierce, blood-and-guts stuff—widows’ benefits and orphans’ benefits, things like that. And still it didn’t add up to \$40 billion. So that sort of created a new awareness of the defense budget . . .

“Once you set aside defense and Social Security, the Medicare complex, and a few other sacred cows of minor dimension, like the VA and the FBI, you have less than \$200 billion worth of discretionary room—only \$144 billion after you cut all the easy discretionary programs this year.”

In short, the fundamental arithmetic of the federal budget, which Stockman and others had brushed aside in the heady days of January, was now back to haunt them. If the new administration would not cut defense or Social

SEASON'S BLEATINGS

BY EDWARD SOREL

ROBERT MONTGOMERY
IS DEAD.MELVYN DOUGLAS
IS DEAD.NELSON EDDY
IS DEAD.GARY COOPER
IS DEAD.FREDRIC MARCH
IS DEAD.RONALD COLMAN
IS DEAD.LESLIE HOWARD
IS DEAD.DEAN MARTIN
IS ALIVE.

SOME CHRISTMAS!



HERE'S WHAT'S NOW BEING SAID ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE'S CIGARETTE SMOKE.



Several months ago, headlines around the world trumpeted alarming news. A Japanese study was claiming that non-smoking wives of smokers had a higher risk of lung cancer because of their husbands' tobacco smoke. That scared a lot of people and understandably so, if this claim was the last word.

But now new headlines have appeared. First, because several apparent errors are reported to have been found in the Japanese study—raising

serious questions about it.

Second, because Lawrence Garfinkel, the statistical director of the American Cancer Society who is opposed to smoking, published a report covering 17 years and nearly 200,000 people in which he indicated that "second-hand" smoke has insignificant effect on lung cancer rates in nonsmokers.

For more information on this important public issue, write Scientific Division, The Tobacco Institute, 1875 I St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006.

BEFORE YOU BELIEVE HALF THE STORY, GET THE WHOLE STORY.

Security or major "safety-net" programs that Reagan had put off limits, then it must savage the smaller slice remaining. Otherwise, balancing the budget in 1984 became an empty promise. The political pain of taking virtually all of the budget savings from government grants and operations would be too great, Stockman believed; Congress would never stand for it. Therefore, he had to begin educating "the West Wing guys" on the necessity for major revisions in their basic plan. He was surprisingly optimistic. "They are now understanding all those things," Stockman said. "A month ago, they didn't. They really thought you could find \$144 billion worth of waste, fraud, and abuse. So at least I've made a lot of headway internally."

Revisions of the original tax-cut plan would probably be the easiest compromise. A modest delay in the effective date would save billions and, besides, many conservatives in Congress were never enthusiastic about the supply-side tax-cutting formula. In order to win its passage, the administration was "prepared to give a little bit on the tax bill," Stockman said, which would help cure his problem of deficits.

Social Security was much more volatile, but Stockman noted that the Senate had already expressed a willingness in test votes to reconsider such basic components as annual cost-of-living increases for retirees. In the House, the Democrats, led by J. J. Pickle, of Texas, were preparing their own set of reforms to keep the system from bankruptcy, so Stockman thought it would be possible to develop a consensus for real changes. He didn't much care for Pickle's proposals, because the impact of the reforms stretched out over some years, whereas Stockman was looking for immediate relief. "I'm just not going to spend a lot of political capital solving some other guy's problem in 2010." But he felt sure a compromise could be worked out. "If you don't do this in 1981, this system is going to land on the rocks," he predicted, "because you won't do it in '82 [a congressional election year] and by '83, you will have solvency problems coming out of your ears. You know, sometimes sheer reality has a sobering effect."

Finally, there was defense. Stockman thought the sobering effects of reality were working in his favor there, too, but he recognized that the political tactics were much trickier. In order to get the first round of budget cuts through Congress, particularly in order to lure the southern Democrats to the President's side, there must be no hint of retreat from Reagan's promises for the Pentagon. That would mobilize the defense lobby against him and help the Democrats hold control of the House. Still, when the timing was right, Stockman thought he would prevail.

"They got a blank check," Stockman admitted. "We didn't have time during that February-March period to do anything with defense. Where are we going to cut? Domestic? Or struggle all day and night with defense? So

I let it go. But it worked perfectly, because they got so goddamned greedy that they got themselves strung way out there on a limb."

As policy-makers and politicians faced up to the additional cuts required in programs, the pressure would lead them back, inevitably, to a tough-minded re-examination of the defense side. Or so Stockman believed. That combination of events, he suggested, would complete the circle for Wall Street.

"The markets will respond to that. Unless they are absolutely perverse."

IV. OLD POLITICS

THE PRESIDENT'S TELEVISED ADDRESS, IN APRIL, WAS masterly and effective: the nation responded with a deluge of mail and telephone calls, and the House of Representatives accepted Reagan's version of budget reconciliation over the Democratic alternative. The final roll call on the Gramm-Latta resolution was not even close, with sixty-three Democrats joining all House Republicans in support of the President. The stunning victory and the disorganized opposition from the Democrats confirmed for Stockman a political hunch he had first developed when he saw the outlines of Representative Jim Jones's resolution, mimicking the administration's budget-cutting. The 1980 election results may not have been "ideological," but the members of Congress seemed to be interpreting them that way.

This new context, Stockman felt, would be invaluable for the weeks ahead, as the budget-and-tax issues moved into the more complicated and vulnerable areas of action. The generalized budget-cutting instructions voted by the House were now sent to each of the authorizing committees, most of them chaired by old-line liberal Democrats who would try to save the programs in their jurisdictions, but their ability to counterattack was clearly limited by the knowledge that President Reagan, not Speaker Tip O'Neill, controlled the floor of the House. Stockman expected the Democratic chairmen to employ all of their best legislative tricks to feign cooperation while actually undermining the Reagan budget cuts, but he was already preparing another Republican resolution, dubbed "Son of Gramm-Latta," to make sure the substantive differences were maintained—the block grants that melded social programs and turned them over to the states, the "caps" on Medicaid and other open-ended entitlement programs, the "zeroing out" of others.

In the first round, Stockman felt that he had retreated on very little. He made the trade with Representative Montgomery on VA hospitals, and his old friend Representative Gramm had restored some "phase-out" funds for EDA, the agency Stockman so much wished to abolish. "He put it in there over my objections," Stockman explained, "because he needed to keep three or four people happy. I said okay, but we're not bound by it." The

Republican resolution also projected a lower deficit than Stockman thought was realistic, as a tactical necessity. "Gramm felt he couldn't win on the floor unless they had a lower deficit, closer to Jones's deficit, so they got it down to \$31 billion by hook or by crook, mostly the latter."

Stockman was supremely confident at that point. The Reagan Administration had taken the measure of its political opposition and had created a new climate in Washington, a new agenda. Now what remained was to follow through in a systematic way that would convince the financial markets. In the middle of May, he made another prediction: the bull market on Wall Street, the one he had expected in April, would arrive by late summer or early fall.

"I think we're on the verge of the response in the financial markets. It takes one more piece of the puzzle, resolution of the tax bill. And that may happen relatively quickly, and when it does, I think you'll start a long bull market, by the end of the summer and early fall. The reinforcement that the President got politically in the legislative process will be doubled, barring some new war in the Middle East, by a perceived economic situation in which things are visibly improving. I'm much more confident now."

Stockman was wrong, of course, about the bull market. But his misinterpretation of events was more profound than that. Without recognizing it at the time, the budget director was headed into a summer in which not only financial markets but life itself seemed to be absolutely perverse. The Reagan program kept winning in public, a series of well-celebrated political victories in Congress—yet privately Stockman was losing his struggle.

Stockman was changing, in a manner that perhaps he himself did not recognize. His conversations began to reflect a new sense of fatalism, a brittle edge of uncertainty.

"There was a certain dimension of our theory that was unrealistic. . ."

"The system has an enormous amount of inertia. . ."

"I don't believe too much in the momentum theory any more. . ."

"I have a new theory—there are no *real* conservatives in Congress. . ."

THE TURNING POINT, WHICH STOCKMAN DID NOT grasp at the time, came in May, shortly after the first House victory. Buoyed by the momentum, the White House put forward, with inadequate political soundings, the Stockman plan for Social Security reform. Among other things, it proposed a drastic reduction in the benefits for early retirement at age sixty-two. Stockman thought this was a privilege that older citizens could comfortably yield, but 64 percent of those eligible for Social Security were now taking early retirement, and



the "reform" plan set off a sudden tempest on Capitol Hill. Democrats accused Reagan of reneging on his promise to exempt Social Security from the budget cuts and accused Stockman of trying to balance his budget at the expense of Social Security recipients, which, of course, he was. "The Social Security problem is not simply one of satisfying actuaries," Stockman conceded. "It's one of satisfying the here-and-now of budget requirements." In the initial flurry of reaction, the Senate passed a unanimous resolution opposing the OMB version of how to reform Social Security, and across the nation, the elderly were alarmed enough to begin writing and calling their representatives in Congress. But Stockman seemed not to grasp the depth of his political problem; he still believed that congressional reaction would quiet down eventually and Democrats would cooperate with him.

"Three things," he explained. "First, the politicians in the White House are over-reacting. They're overly alarmed. Second, there is a serious political problem with it, but not of insurmountable dimensions. And third, basically I screwed up quite a bit on the way the damn thing was handled."

Stockman said that Republicans on Ways and Means



TESTIFYING BEFORE THE SENATE BUDGET COMMITTEE

were urging him to propose an administration reform plan as an alternative to the Democrats'; Stockman misjudged the political climate. The White House plan, put together in haste, had "a lot of technical bloopers," which made it even more vulnerable to attack, Stockman said. "I was just racing against the clock. All the office things I knew ought to be done by way of groundwork, advance preparation, and so forth just fell by the wayside. . . Now we're taking the flak from all the rest of the Republicans because we didn't inform them."

Despite the political uproar, Stockman thought a compromise would eventually emerge, because of the pressure to "save" Social Security. This would give him at least a portion of the budget savings he needed. "I still think we'll recover a good deal of ground from this. It will permit the politicians to make it look like they're doing something *for* the beneficiary population when they are doing something *to* it which they normally wouldn't have the courage to undertake."

But there was less "courage" among politicians than Stockman assumed. Indeed, one politician who scurried away from the President's proposed cuts in Social Security was the President. Stockman wanted him to go on

television again, address the nation on Social Security's impending bankruptcy, and build a popular constituency for the changes. But White House advisers did not.

"The President was very interested [in the reform package] and he believed it was the right thing to do. The problem is that the politicians are so wary of the Social Security issue *per se* that they want to keep him away from it, thinking they could somehow have an administration initiative that came out of the boondocks somewhere and the President wouldn't be tagged with it. Well, that was just pure naive nonsense. . . My view was, if you had to play this thing over, you should have the President go on TV and give a twenty-minute Fireside Chat, with some nice charts. . . You could have created a climate in which major things could be changed."

The White House rejected that idea. Ronald Reagan kept his distance from the controversy, but it would not go away. In September, Reagan did finally address the issue in a televised chat with the nation: he disowned Stockman's reform plan. Reagan said that there was a lot of "misinformation" about in the land, to the effect that the President wanted to cut Social Security. Not true, he declared, though Reagan had proposed such a cut in May.

Indeed, the President not only buried the Social Security cuts he had proposed earlier but retreated on one reform measure—elimination of the minimum benefits—that Congress had already, reluctantly, approved. As though he had missed the long debate on that issue, Reagan announced that it was never his intention to deprive anyone who was in genuine need. Any legislative action toward altering Social Security would be postponed until 1983, after the 1982 congressional elections, and too late to help Stockman with his stubborn deficits. In the meantime, Reagan accepted a temporary solution advocated by the Democrats and denounced by Stockman as “irresponsible”—borrowing from another federal trust fund that was in surplus, the health-care fund, to cover Social Security’s problems. Everyone put the best face on it, including Stockman. The tactical retreat, they explained, was the only thing Reagan could do under the circumstances—a smart move, given the explosive nature of the Social Security protest. Still, it was a retreat, and, for David Stockman, a fundamental defeat. He lost one major source of potential budget savings. The political outcome did not suggest that he would do much better when he proposed reforms for Medicare, Social Security’s twin.

WHERE WOULD STOCKMAN FIND THE MONEY TO COVER those deficits, variously estimated at \$44 to \$65 billion? The tax-cut legislation itself became one of Stockman’s best hopes. The tax bargaining had begun in the spring as a delicate process of private negotiations and reassurances with different groups—with Democrats needed for a House majority, with nervous Republicans still leery of the supply-side theology, and with the supply-side apostles zealously defending their creed. Stockman was a participant, though not the lead player, in this process; he met almost daily with the legislative tactical group at the White House—Edwin Meese, Jim Baker, Donald Regan, presidential assistant Richard Darman, and others—that called signals on both the tax legislation and budget reconciliation.

Stockman’s interest was made clear to the others: he wanted a compromise on the tax bill which would substantially reduce its drain on the federal treasury and thus moderate the fiscal damage of Reaganomics. Stockman thought that if the Republicans could compromise with the Ways and Means chairman, Representative Dan Rostenkowski, the tax legislation would still be a supply-side tax cut in its approach but considerably smaller in size. More important, they would avoid a bidding war for votes. “We’re kind of divided, not in an antagonistic sense, just sort of a judgment sense, between those who want to call off the game . . . and those of us who want to give Rostenkowski a few more days to see what he can achieve.”

The negotiations with Rostenkowski ended in failure,

and the Reagan team agreed that it would have to modify its own tax-cut plan in order to lure fiscal conservatives. Under the revised plan, the first-year reduction was only 5 percent and, more important, the impact was delayed until late in the year, substantially reducing the revenue loss. The White House also made substantial changes in the business-depreciation and tax-credit rules, which were intended to stimulate new industrial investments, reducing the overly generous provisions for business tax write-offs on new equipment and buildings.

Stockman was privately delighted: he saw a three-year revenue savings of \$70 billion in the compromise. The depreciation rules that big business wanted were “way out of joint,” Stockman insisted. But he was nervous about the \$70 billion figure, because he feared that when Representative Jack Kemp (co-sponsor of the original supply-side tax proposal, the Kemp-Roth bill) and other supply-side advocates heard it, they might regard the savings as so large that it would undermine the stimulative effects of the major tax reduction. “As long as Jack is happy with what’s happening,” Stockman said, “it’s hard for the [supply-side] network to mobilize itself with a shrill voice. Jack’s satisfied, although we’re sort of on the edge of thin ice with him.”

The supply-side effects would still be strong, Stockman said, but he added a significant disclaimer that would have offended true believers, for it sounded like old orthodoxy: “I’ve never believed that just cutting taxes alone will cause output and employment to expand.”

Stockman himself had been a late convert to supply-side theology, and now he was beginning to leave the church. The theory of “expectations” wasn’t working. He could see that. And Stockman’s institutional role as budget director forced him to look constantly at aspects of the political economy that the other supply-siders tended to dismiss. Whatever the reason, Stockman was creating some distance between himself and the supply-side purists; eventually, he would become the target of their nasty barbs. For his part, Stockman began to disparage the grand theory as a kind of convenient illusion—new rhetoric to cover old Republican doctrine.

“The hard part of the supply-side tax cut is dropping the top rate from 70 to 50 percent—the rest of it is a secondary matter,” Stockman explained. “The original argument was that the top bracket was too high, and that’s having the most devastating effect on the economy. Then, the general argument was that, in order to make this palatable as a political matter, you had to bring down all the brackets. But, I mean, Kemp-Roth was always a Trojan horse to bring down the top rate.”

A Trojan horse? This seemed a cynical concession for Stockman to make in private conversation while the Reagan Administration was still selling the supply-side doctrine to Congress. Yet he was conceding what the liberal Keynesian critics had argued from the outset—the supply-side theory was not a new economic theory at all but

only new language and argument to conceal a hoary old Republican doctrine: give the tax cuts to the top brackets, the wealthiest individuals and largest enterprises, and let the good effects "trickle down" through the economy to reach everyone else. Yes, Stockman conceded, when one stripped away the new rhetoric emphasizing across-the-board cuts, the supply-side theory was really new clothes for the unpopular doctrine of the old Republican orthodoxy. "It's kind of hard to sell 'trickle down,'" he explained, "so the supply-side formula was the only way to get a tax policy that was really 'trickle down.' Supply-side is 'trickle-down' theory."

But the young budget director once again misjudged the political context. The scaled-down version of the administration's tax bill would need to carry a few "ornaments" in order to win—a special bail-out to help the troubled savings-and-loan industry, elimination of the so-called marriage penalty—but he was confident that the Reagan majority would hold and he could save \$70 billion against those out-year deficits. The business lobbyists would object, he conceded, when they saw the new Republican version of depreciation allowances, but the key congressmen were "on board," and the package would hold.

In early June, it fell apart. The tax lobbyists of Washington, when they saw the outlines of the Reagan tax bill, mobilized the business community, the influential economic sectors from oil to real estate. In a matter of days, they created the political environment in which they flourish best—a bidding war between the two parties. First the Democrats revealed that their tax bill would be more generous than Reagan's in its depreciation rules. Despite Stockman's self-confidence, the White House quickly retreated—scrapped its revised and leaner proposal, and began matching the Democrats, billion for billion, in tax concessions. The final tax legislation would yield, in total, an astounding revenue loss for the federal government of \$750 billion over the next five years.

Stockman, with his characteristic ability to adjust his premises to new political realities, at first insisted that the White House cave-in on the business-depreciation issue was of no consequence to his budget problems, since the major impact of the concessions would hit the period 1985 and 1986, beyond the budget years he was struggling with.

Nevertheless, Stockman conceded that the administration had flinched, sending a clear signal to the political interests that it would respond to pressure. "I think we're in trouble on the tax bill," he said in mid-June, "because we started with the position that this was a policy-based bill . . . that we weren't going to get involved in the tax-bill brokering of special-interest claims. But then we made the compromise. . . . My fear now is that, if we do that too many times, it becomes clear to the whole tax-lobby constituency in Washington that we will deal with them one at a time, and then you'll find their champions

on the tax-writing committees, especially Finance, swinging into action, and we are going to end up backpedaling so fast that we will have the 'Christmas tree' bill before we know it."

THAT WAS AN ASTUTE FORECAST OF WHAT UNFOLDED over the next six weeks. Stockman both participated in the process and privately denounced it. But he was not fully engaged in the political scramble for tax concessions, because he was preoccupied with controlling another political auction already under way: the furious bumping-and-trading for the final budget-cutting measure, the reconciliation bill. The thirteen authorizing committees of the House were drawing up the legislative parts to comply with the budget instructions voted by the House in May; simultaneously, the Republican minority members of those committees were drawing up their alternatives, which would become pieces of the administration's alternative—"Son of Gramm-Latta." Stockman was working closely with the Republican drafting in the House, but at the same time he was trying to keep the specific cuts and policy changes in line with the work of the Republican committee chairmen in the Senate. Stockman had a believable nightmare: if House and Senate produced drastically different versions of the final reconciliation measure, there could be a conference committee between the two chambers that would include hundreds of members and months of combat over the differences. Failure to settle quickly could sink the entire budget-cutting enterprise.

Some of the Democratic committee chairmen were playing the "Washington Monument game" (a metaphor for phony budget cuts, in which the National Park Service, ordered to save money, announces that it is closing the Washington Monument). The Education and Labor Committee made deep cuts in programs that it knew were politically sacred: Head Start and impact aid for local schools, and care for the elderly. The Post Office and Civil Service Committee proposed closing 5,000 post offices. Stockman could deal with those ploys—indeed, he felt they strengthened his hand—but he was weakened on other fronts. Again, he had to hold all Republicans and win several dozen of the "boll weevils"—to demonstrate that Ronald Reagan controlled the House. It was not a matter of trading with liberal constituencies and their representatives; Stockman had to do his trading with the conservatives. "In that kind of game," he said, "everybody can ask a big price for one vote."

The final pasted-together measure would be several thousand pages of legislative action and, Stockman feared, another version of the Trojan horse—"a Trojan horse filled full of all kinds of budget-busting measures and secondary agendas."

A group of twenty northern and midwestern, more moderate Republicans, who organized themselves as



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Painting by Masami Teraoka

TIME

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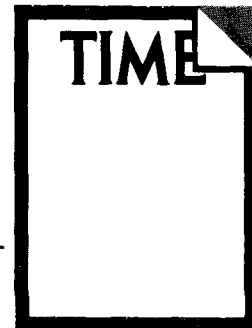
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"gypsy moths" as a counterweight to the "boll weevils," threatened defection. In the end, concessions were made: \$350 million more for Medicaid, \$400 million more for home-heating subsidies for the poor, \$260 million in mass-transit operating funds, more money for Amtrak and Conrail. The administration agreed to put even more money into the nuclear-power project that Stockman loathed, the Clinch River fast-breeder reactor. It accepted a large authorization for the Export-Import Bank, and more.

Stockman tried to keep everything in line. When he agreed with House Republicans to restore \$100 million or so to Amtrak, he had to go back and alert Bob Packwood, of Oregon, chairman of the Senate committee. "The Senate level which his committee tentatively voted out would have shut down a train in Oregon," Stockman said, "and he didn't relish the prospect of not being able to defend his train in the Senate and have it put back in by House Republicans."

In private, the budget director claimed that these new spending figures that Republicans had agreed upon for the various federal programs were not final but merely authorization ceilings, which could be reduced later on, when the appropriations bills for departments and agencies worked their way through the legislative process. "It doesn't mean that you've lost ground," he said blithely of his compromises, "because in the appropriations process we can still insist on \$100 million (or whatever other figures appeared in the original Reagan budget) and veto the bill if it goes over. . . . On these authorizations, we can give some ground and then have another run at it."

This codicil of Stockman's was apparently not communicated to the Republicans with whom he was making deals. They presumed that the final figures negotiated with Stockman were final figures. Later on, they discovered that the budget director didn't agree. When in September the President announced a new round of reductions, \$13 billion in across-the-board cuts for fiscal year 1982, the ranks of his congressional supporters accused Stockman of breaking his word. In private, some used stronger language. The new budget cuts Stockman prepared in September did, indeed, scrap many of the agreements he negotiated in June when he was collecting enough votes to pass the President's reconciliation bill. In the political morality that prevails in Washington, this was regarded as dishonorable behavior, and Stockman's personal standing was damaged.

"Piranhas," Stockman called the Republican dealers. Yet he was a willing participant in one of the rankest trades—his casual promise that the Reagan Administration would not oppose revival of sugar supports, a scandalous price-support loan program killed by Congress in 1979. Sugar subsidies might not cost the government anything, but could cost consumers \$2 to \$5 billion. "In public principle, it's kind of a rotten idea," he conceded. "What would Ronald Reagan's White House object? 'They

don't care, over in the White House. They want to win.'"

This process of trading, vote by vote, injured Stockman in more profound ways, beyond the care or cautions of his fellow politicians. It was undermining his original moral premise—the idea that honest free-market conservatism could unshackle the government from the costly claims of interest-group politics in a way that was fair to both the weak and the strong. To reject weak claims from powerful clients—that was the intellectual credo that allowed him to hack away so confidently at wasteful social programs, believing that he was being equally tough-minded on the wasteful business subsidies. Now, as the final balance was being struck, he was forced to concede in private that the claim of equity in shrinking the government was significantly compromised if not obliterated.

THE FINAL RECONCILIATION MEASURE AUTHORIZED budget reductions of \$35.1 billion, about \$6 billion less than the President's original proposal, though Stockman and others said the difference would be made up through shrinking "off-budget" programs, which are not included in the appropriations process. The block grants and reductions and caps that Reagan proposed were partially successful—some sixty major programs were consolidated in different block-grant categories—though Stockman lost several important reforms in the final scrambling, among them the cap on the runaway costs of Medicaid, and user fees for federal waterways. The Reagan Administration eliminated dozens of smaller activities and drastically scaled down dozens of others.

In political terms, it was a great victory. Ronald Reagan became the first President since Lyndon Johnson to demonstrate both the tactical skill and the popular strength to stare down the natural institutional opposition of Congress. Moreover, he forced Congress to slog through a series of unique and painful legislative steps—a genuine reconciliation measure—that undermined the parochial baronies of the committee chairmen. Around Washington, even among the critics who despised what he was attempting, there was general agreement that the Reagan Administration would not have succeeded, perhaps would not even have gotten started, without the extraordinary young man who had a plan. He knew what he wanted to attack and he knew Congress well enough to know how to attack.

Yet, in the glow of victory, why was David Stockman so downcast? Another young man, ambitious for his future, might have seized the moment to claim his full share of praise. Stockman did appear on the Sunday talk shows, and was interviewed by the usual columnists. But in private, he was surprisingly modest about his achievement. Two weeks after selling Congress on the biggest package of budget reductions in the history of the republic, Stockman was willing to dismiss the accomplishment as less

significant than the participants realized. Why? Because he knew that much more traumatic budget decisions still confronted them. Because he knew that the budget-resolution numbers were an exaggeration. The total of \$35 billion was less than it seemed, because the "cuts" were from an imaginary number—hypothetical projections from the Congressional Budget Office on where spending would go if nothing changed in policy or economic activity. Stockman knew that the CBO base was a bit unreal. Therefore, the total of "cuts" was, too.

Stockman explained: "There was less there than met the eye. Nobody has figured it out yet. Let's say that you and I walked outside and I waved a wand and said, I've just lowered the temperature from 110 to 78. Would you believe me? What this was was a cut from an artificial CBO base. That's why it looked so big. But it wasn't. It was a significant and helpful cut from what you might call the moving track of the budget of the government, but the numbers are just out of this world. The government never would have been up at those levels in the CBO base."

Stockman was proud of what had been changed—shutting down the \$4 billion CETA jobs program and others, putting real caps on runaway programs such as the trade adjustment assistance for unemployed industrial workers. "Those were powerful spending programs that have been curtailed," he said, "but there was a kind of consensus emerging for that anyway, even before this administration."

All in all, Stockman gave a modest summary of what had been wrought by the budget victory: "It has really slowed down the momentum, but it hasn't stopped what you would call the excessive growth of the budget. Because the budget isn't something you reconstruct each year. The budget is a sort of rolling history of decisions. All kinds of decisions, made five, ten, fifteen years ago, are coming back to bite us unexpectedly. Therefore, in my judgment, it will take three or four or five years to subdue it. Whether anyone can maintain the political momentum to fight the beast for that long, I don't know."

Stockman, the natural optimist, was not especially optimistic. The future of fiscal conservatism, in a political community where there are "no real conservatives," no longer seemed so promising to him. He spoke in an analytical tone, a sober intellect trying to figure things out, and only marginally bitter, as he assessed what had happened to his hopes since January. In July, he was forced to conclude that, despite the appearance of a great triumph, his original agenda was fading, not flourishing.

"I don't believe too much in the momentum theory any more," he said. "I believe in institutional inertia. Two months of response can't beat fifteen years of political infrastructure. I'm talking about K Street and all of the interest groups in this town, the community of interest

groups. We sort of stunned it, but it just went underground for the winter. It will be back . . . Can we win? A lot of it depends on events and luck. If we got some bad luck, a flareup in the Middle East, a scandal, it could all fall apart."

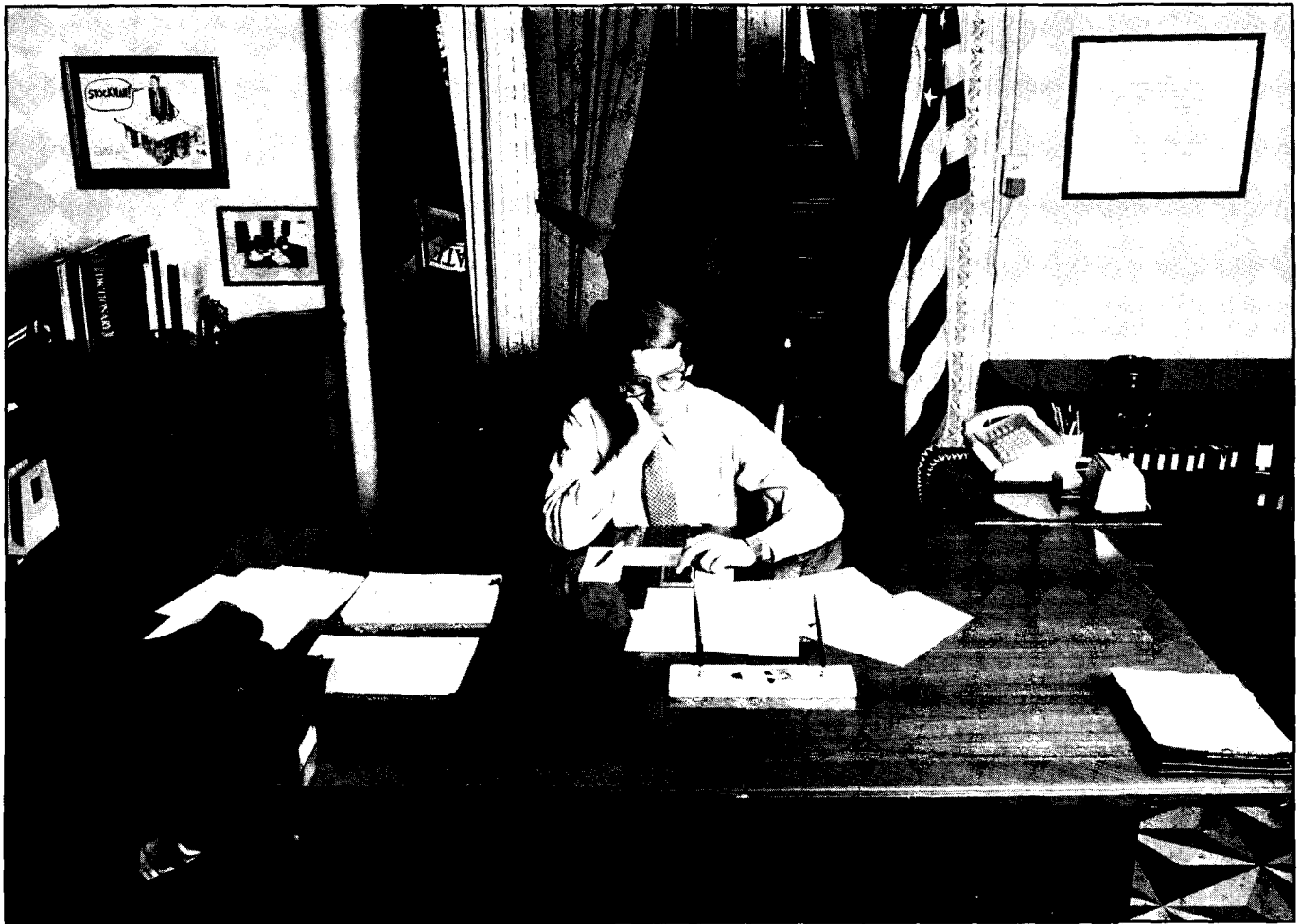
STOCKMAN'S DOUR OUTLOOK WAS REINFORCED TWO weeks later, when the Reagan coalition prevailed again in the House and Congress passed the tax-cut legislation with a final frenzy of trading and bargaining. Again, Stockman was not exhilarated by the victory. On the contrary, it seemed to leave a bad taste in his mouth, as though the democratic process had finally succeeded in shocking him by its intensity and its greed. Once again, Stockman participated in the trading—special tax concessions for oil-lease holders and real-estate tax shelters, and generous loopholes that virtually eliminated the corporate income tax. Stockman sat in the room and saw it happen.

"Do you realize the greed that came to the forefront?" Stockman asked with wonder. "The hogs were really feeding. The greed level, the level of opportunism, just got out of control."

Indeed, when the Republicans and Democrats began their competition for authorship of tax concessions, Stockman saw the "new political climate" dissolve rather rapidly and be replaced by the reflexes of old politics. Every tax lobby in town, from tax credits for wood-burning stoves to new accounting concessions for small business, moved in on the legislation, and pet amendments for obscure tax advantage and profit became the pivotal issues of legislative action, not the grand theories of supply-side tax reduction. "The politics of the bill turned out to be very traditional. The politics put us back in the game, after we started making concessions. The basic strategy was to match or exceed the Democrats, and we did."

But Stockman was buoyant about the political implications of the tax legislation: first, because it put a tightening noose around the size of the government; second, because it gave millions of middle-class voters tangible relief from inflation, even if the stimulative effects on the economy were mild or delayed. Stockman imagined the tax cutting as perhaps the beginning of a large-scale realignment of political loyalties, away from old-line liberalism and toward Reaganism.

And where did principle hide? Stockman, with his characteristic mixture of tactical cynicism and intellectual honesty, was unwilling to defend the moral premises of what had occurred. The "idea-based" policies that he had espoused at the outset were, in the final event, greatly compromised by the "constituency-based" politics that he abhorred. What had changed, fundamentally, was the list of winning clients, not the nature of the game. Stockman had said the new conservatism would pursue equity,



BACK AT WORK IN THE OLD EXECUTIVE OFFICE BUILDING

even as it attempted to shrink the government. It would honor just claims and reject spurious ones, instead of simply serving powerful clients over weak clients. He was compelled to agree, at the legislative climax, that the original moral premises had not been served, that the new principles of Reaganism were compromised by the necessity of winning.

"I now understand," he said, "that you probably can't put together a majority coalition unless you are willing to deal with those marginal interests that will give you the votes needed to win. That's where it is fought—on the margins—and unless you deal with those marginal votes, you can't win."

In order to enact Reagan's version of tax reduction, "certain wages" had to be paid, and, as Stockman reasoned, the process of brokering was utterly free of principle or policy objectives. The power flowed to the handful of representatives who could reverse the majority, regardless of the interests they represented. Once the Reagan tacticians began making concessions beyond their "policy-based" agenda, it developed that their trades and compromises and giveaways were utterly indistinguishable from the decades of interest-group accommodations that had preceded them, which they so

righteously denounced. What was new about the Reagan revolution, in which oil-royalty owners win and welfare mothers lose? Was the new philosophy so different from old Republicanism when the federal subsidies for Boeing and Westinghouse and General Electric were protected, while federal subsidies for unemployed black teenagers were "zeroed out"? One could go on, at great length, searching for balance and equity in the outcome of the Reagan program without satisfying the question; the argument will continue as a central theme of electoral politics for the next few years. For now, Stockman would concede this much: that "weak clients" suffered for their weakness.

"Power is contingent," he said. "The power of these client groups turned out to be stronger than I realized. The client groups know how to make themselves heard. The problem is, unorganized groups can't play in this game."

When Congress recessed for its August vacation and President Reagan took off for his ranch in the West, David Stockman had a surprising answer to one of his original questions: could he prevail in the political arena, against the status quo? His original skepticism about Congress was mistaken; the administration had pre-

vailed brilliantly as politicians. And yet, it also seemed that the status quo, in an intangible sense that most politicians would not even recognize, much less worry over, had prevailed over David Stockman.

V. "WHO KNOWS?"

GENERALLY, HE DID NOT LOSE HIS TEMPER, BUT on a pleasant afternoon in early September, Stockman returned from a meeting at the White House in a terrible black mood. In his ornately appointed office at OMB, he slammed his papers down on the desk and waved away associates. At the Oval Office that afternoon, Stockman had lost the great argument he had been carefully preparing since February: there would be no major retrenchment in the defense budget. Over the summer, Stockman had made converts, one by one, in the Cabinet and among the President's senior advisers. But he could not convince the only hawk who mattered—Ronald Reagan. When the President announced that he would reduce the Pentagon budget by only \$13 billion over the next three years, it seemed a pitiful sum compared with what he proposed for domestic programs, hardly a scratch on the military complex, which was growing toward \$350 billion a year.

"Defense is setting itself up for a big fall," Stockman had predicted. "If they try to roll me and win, they're going to have a huge problem in Congress. The pain level is going to be too high. If the Pentagon isn't careful, they are going to turn it into a priorities debate in an election year."

Two days later, when we met for another breakfast conversation, Stockman had recovered from his anger. The argument over the defense budget, he insisted crankily, was a tempest stirred up by the press. The defense budget was never contemplated as a major target for savings. When Stockman was reminded of his earlier claims and predictions—how he would attack the Pentagon's bloated inefficiencies, assisted by a clear-eyed secretary of defense—he shrugged and smiled thinly.

Autumn was cruel to David Stockman's idea of how the world should work. The summer, when furious legislative trading was under way, had tattered his moral vision of government. Politics, in the dirty sense, had prevailed. Now he was confronted with more serious possibilities—the failure of the economic strategy and the political unraveling that he had feared from the beginning. On Capitol Hill, where Stockman was admired and envied for his nimble mind, where even critics conceded that his presence in the Cabinet was essential to Ronald Reagan's opening victories, politicians of both parties were beginning to reach a different conclusion about him. Despite the wizardry, Stockman did not have all the answers, after all. The wizard was prepared to agree.

His failed expectations were derived from many events. In August, when enactment of the Reagan pro-

gram was supposed to create a boom, instead, the financial markets sagged. Interest rates went still higher, squeezing the various sectors of the American economy. Real-estate sales were dead, and the housing industry was at a historic low point. The same was true for auto sales. Farmers complained about the exorbitant interest demanded for annual crop loans. Hundreds of savings-and-loan associations were at the edge of insolvency. The treasury secretary, perhaps also losing his original faith in the supply-side formulation, suggested that it was time for the Federal Reserve Board to loosen up on its tight monetary policy. Donald Regan saw a recession approaching.

Stockman's prospects for balancing the budget were getting worse, not better. The optimistic economic forecast made in January to improve his original budget projections came back to haunt him in September. The inflation rate was down considerably (a prediction fortuitously correct because of oil and grain prices) but interest rates were not: the cost of federal borrowing and debt payments went still higher.

Stockman was boxed in, and he knew it. Unable to cut defense or Social Security or to modify the overly generous tax legislation, he was forced to turn back to the simple arithmetic of the federal budget—and cut even more from that smaller slice of the federal dollar that pays for government operations and grants and other entitlements. For six months, Stockman had been explaining to "the West Wing guys" that this math wouldn't add. When Reagan proposed his new round of \$16 billion in savings, the political outrage confirmed the diagnosis. Stockman was accused of breaking the agreements he had made in June: Senate Republicans who had accepted the "magic asterisk" so docilely were now talking of rebellion—postponing the enormous tax reductions they had just enacted. While the White House promised a war of vetoes ahead, intended to demonstrate "fiscal control," Stockman knew that even if those short-range battles were won, the budget would not be balanced.

Disappointed by events and confronted with potential failure, the Reagan White House was developing a new political strategy: wage war with Congress over the budget issues and, in 1982, blame the Democrats for whatever goes wrong.

The budget director developed a new wryness as he plunged gamely on with these congressional struggles; it was a quality more appealing than certitude. Appearing before the House Budget Committee, Stockman listed a new budget item on his deficit sheet, drolly labeled "Inaction on Social Security." With remarkable directness and no "magic asterisks," he described the outlook: federal deficits of \$60 billion in each of the next three years. Some analysts thought his predictions were modest. In the autumn of 1981, despite his great victories in Congress, Ronald Reagan had not as yet produced a plausible answer to John Anderson's question.

Still, things might work out, Stockman said. They might find an answer. The President's popularity might carry them through. The tax cuts would make people happy. The economy might start to respond, eventually, to the stimulation of the tax cuts. "Who knows?" Stockman said. From David Stockman, it was a startling remark. He would continue to invent new scenarios for success, but they would be more complicated and cloudy than his original optimism. "Who knows?" The world was less manageable than he had imagined; this machine had too many crazy moving parts to incorporate in a single lucid theory. The "random elements" of history—politics, the economy, the anarchical budget numbers—were out of control.

WHERE DID THINGS GO WRONG? STOCKMAN KEPT asking and answering the right questions. The more he considered it, the more he moved away from the radical vision of reformer, away from the wishful thinking of supply-side economics, and toward the "old-time religion" of conservative economic thinking. Orthodoxy seemed less exciting than radicalism, but perhaps Stockman was only starting into another intellectual transition. He had changed from farm boy to campus activist at Michigan State, from Christian moralist to neo-conservative at Harvard; once again, Stockman was reformulating his ideas on how the world worked. What had he learned?

"The reason we did it wrong—not wrong, but less than the optimum—was that we said, Hey, we have to get a program out fast. And when you decide to put a program of this breadth and depth out fast, you can only do so much. We were working in a twenty or twenty-five-day time frame, and we didn't think it all the way through. We didn't add up all the numbers. We didn't make all the thorough, comprehensive calculations about where we really needed to come out and how much to put on the plate the first time, and so forth. In other words, we ended up with a list that I'd always been carrying of things to be done, rather than starting the other way and asking, What is the overall fiscal policy required to reach the target?"

That regret was beyond remedy now; all Stockman could do was keep trying on different fronts, trying to catch up with the shortcomings of the original Reagan prospectus. But Stockman's new budget-cutting tactics were denounced as panic by his former allies in the supply-side camp. They now realized that Stockman regarded them as "overly optimistic" in predicting a pain-

less boom through across-the-board tax reduction. "Some of the naive supply-siders just missed this whole dimension," he said. "You don't stop inflation without some kind of dislocation. You don't stop the growth of money supply in a three-trillion-dollar economy without some kind of dislocation . . . Supply-side was the wrong atmospheric—not wrong theory or wrong economics, but wrong atmospheric . . . The supply-siders have gone too far. They created this nonpolitical view of the economy, where you are going to have big changes and abrupt turns, and their happy vision of this world of growth and no inflation with no pain."

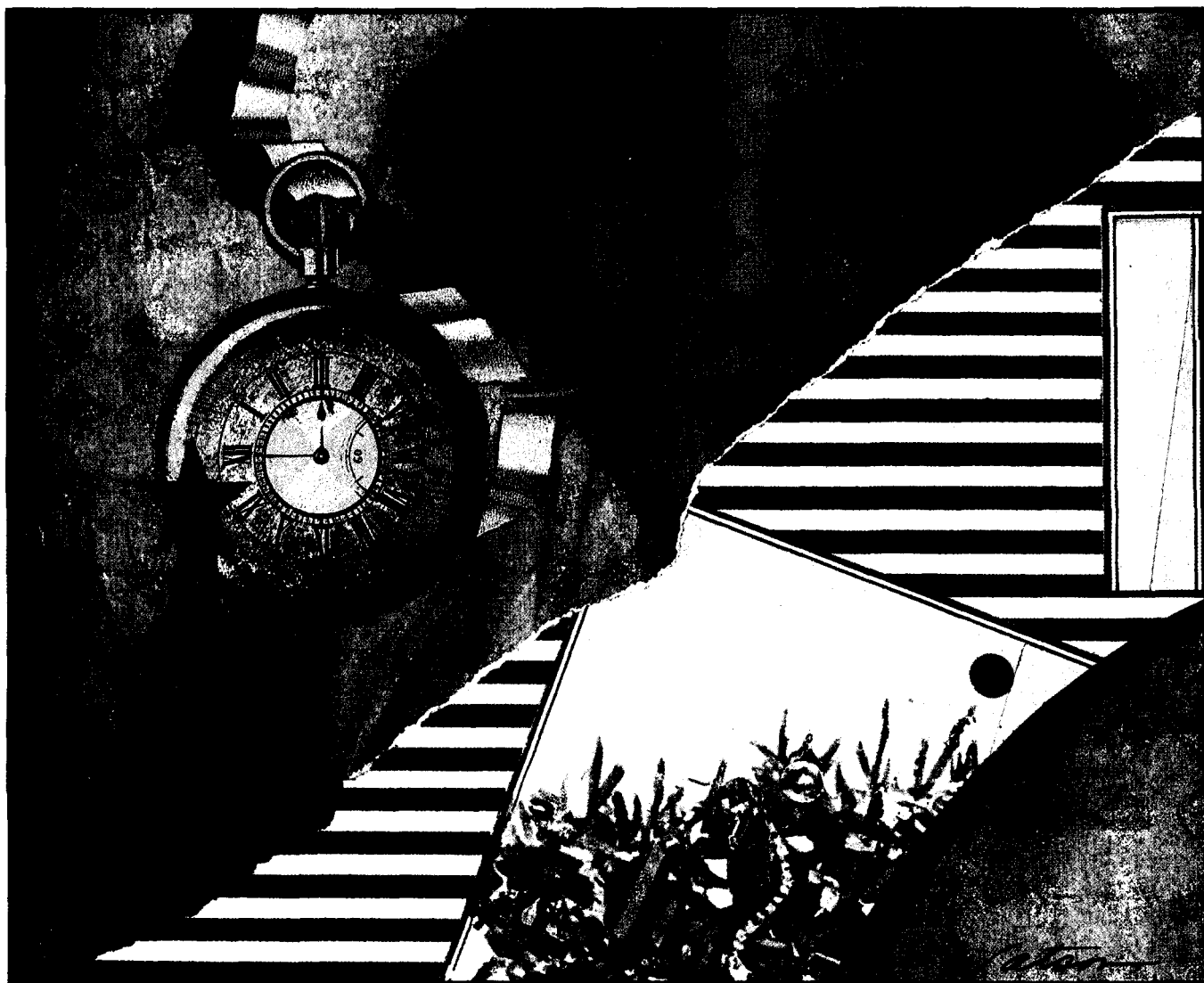
The "dislocations" were multiplying across the nation, creating panic among the congressmen and senators who had just enacted this "fiscal revolution." But Stockman now understood that no amount of rhetoric from Washington, not the President's warmth on television nor his own nimble testimony before congressional hearings, would alter the economic forces at work. Tight monetary control should continue, he believed, until the inflationary fevers were sweated out of the economy. People would be hurt. Afterward, after the recession, perhaps the supply-side effects could begin—robust expansion, new investment, new jobs. The question was whether the country or its elected representatives would wait long enough.

His exasperation was evident: "I can't move the system any faster. I can't have an emergency session of Congress to say, Here's a resolution to cut the permanent size of government by 18 percent, vote it up or down. If we did that, it would be all over. But the system works much more slowly. But what can I do about it? Okay? Nothing. So I'm not going to navel-gaze about it too long."

Still trying, still energetic, but no longer abundantly optimistic, Stockman knew that congressional anxieties over the next election were already stronger, making each new proposal more difficult. "The 1982 election cycle will tell us all we need to know about whether the democratic society wants fiscal control in the federal government," Stockman said grimly.

The alternative still energized him. If they failed, if inflation and economic disorder continued, the conservative reformers would be swept aside by popular unrest. The nation would turn back toward "statist" solutions, controls devised and administered from Washington. Stockman shrugged at that possibility.

"Whenever there are great strains or changes in the economic system," he explained, "it tends to generate crackpot theories, which then find their way into the legislative channels." □



DRAWING NAMES

A SHORT STORY BY BOBBIE ANN MASON

ON CHRISTMAS DAY, CAROLYN SISSON WENT EARLY to her parents' house to help her mother with the dinner. Carolyn had been divorced two years before, and last Christmas, coming alone, she had felt uncomfortable. This year she had invited her lover, Kent Ballard, to join the family gathering. She had even brought him a present to put under the tree, so he wouldn't feel left out. Kent was planning to drive over from Kentucky Lake by noon. He had gone there to inspect his boat because of an ice storm earlier in the week. He felt compelled to visit his boat on the holiday, Carolyn thought, as if it were a sad old relative in a retirement home.

"We're having baked ham instead of turkey," Mom said. "Your daddy never did like ham baked, but whoever heard of fried ham on Christmas? We have that all year round and I'm burnt out on it."

"I love baked ham," said Carolyn.

"Does Kent like it baked?"

"I'm sure he does." Carolyn placed her gifts under the tree. The number of packages seemed unusually small.

"It don't seem like Christmas with drawn names," said Mom.

"Your star's about to fall off." Carolyn straightened the silver ornament at the tip of the tree.

"I didn't decorate as much as I wanted to. I'm slowing

down. Getting old, I guess." Mom had not combed her hair, and she was wearing a work shirt and tennis shoes.

"You always try to do too much on Christmas, Mom."

Carolyn knew the agreement to draw names had bothered her mother. But the four daughters were grown, and two had children. Sixteen people were expected today. Carolyn herself could not afford to buy fifteen presents on her salary as a clerk at J.C. Penney's, and her parents' small farm had not been profitable in years.

Carolyn's father appeared in the kitchen, and he hugged her so tightly she squealed in protest.

"That's all I can afford this year," he said, laughing. As he took a piece of candy from a dish on the counter, Carolyn teased him. "You'd better watch your calories today."

"Oh, not on Christmas!"

It made Carolyn sad to see her handsome father getting older. He was a shy man, awkward with his daughters, and Carolyn knew he had been deeply disappointed over her failed marriage, although he had never said so. Now he asked, "Who bought these 'toes'?"

He would no longer say "nigger toes," his old name for the chocolate-covered creams.

"Hattie Smoot brought those over," said Mom. "I made a pants suit for her last week," she said to Carolyn. "She's the woman that had stomach bypass?"

"When PeeWee McClain had that, it didn't work and they had to fix him back like he was," said Dad. He offered Carolyn a piece of candy, but she shook her head no.

Mom said, "I made Hattie a dress back last spring for her boy's graduation, and she couldn't even find a pattern big enough. I had to 'low a foot. But after that bypass, she's down to a size twenty."

"I think we'll all need a stomach bypass after we eat this feast you're fixing," said Carolyn.

"Where's Kent?" Dad asked abruptly.

"He went to see about his boat. He said he'd be here."

Carolyn looked at the clock. She felt uneasy about inviting Kent. Everyone would be scrutinizing him, as if he were some new character on a soap opera. Kent, who drove a truck for the Kentucky Loose-Leaf Floor, was a part-time student at Murray State. He was majoring in accounting. When Carolyn had started going with him, early in the summer, they had gone sailing on his boat, which had "Joyce" painted on it. Later, he painted over the name, insisting he didn't love Joyce anymore, but he had never said he loved Carolyn. She did not know if she loved him. Each seemed to be waiting for the other to say it first.

While Carolyn helped her mother in the kitchen, Dad went to get her grandfather, her mother's father. Pappy, who had been disabled by a stroke, was cared for by a live-in housekeeper who had gone home to her own family for the day. Carolyn diced apples and pears for fruit

salad while her mother shaped sweet-potato balls with marshmallow centers and rolled them in crushed cornflakes. On TV in the living room, *Days of Our Lives* was beginning, but the Christmas tree blocked their view of the television set.

"Whose name did you draw, Mom?" Carolyn asked, as she began seeding the grapes.

"Jim's."

"You put Jim's name in the hat?"

Mom nodded. Jim Walsh was the man Carolyn's younger sister, Laura Jean, was living with in St. Louis. Laura Jean was going to an interior decorating school, and Jim was a textiles salesman she had met in a class. "I made him a shirt," Mom said.

"I'm surprised at you."

"Well, what was I to do?"

"I'm just surprised." Carolyn ate a grape and spit out the seeds. "Emily Post says the couple should be offered the same room when they visit."

"You know we'd never stand for that. I don't think your dad's ever got over her stacking up with that guy."

"You mean shacking up."

"Same thing." Mom dropped the potato masher, and the metal rattled on the floor. "Oh, I'm in such a tizzy," she said.



AS THE FAMILY BEGAN TO ARRIVE, THE NOISE OF the TV played against the greetings, the slam of the storm door, the outside wind rushing in. Carolyn's older sisters, Peggy and Iris, with their husbands and children, were arriving all at once, and suddenly the house seemed small. Peggy's children Stevie and Cheryl, without even removing their jackets, became involved in a basketball game on TV. In his lap, Stevie had a Merlin electronic toy, which beeped randomly. Iris and Ray's children, Deedee and Jonathan, went outside to look for cats.

In the living room, Peggy jiggled her baby, Lisa, on her hip and said, "You need you one of these, Carolyn."

"Where can I get one?" said Carolyn, rather sharply.

Peggy grinned. "At the gittin' place, I reckon."

Peggy's critical tone was familiar. She was the only sister who had had a real wedding. Her husband, Cecil,

had a Gulf franchise, and they owned a motor-cruiser, a pickup truck, a camper, a station wagon, and a new brick colonial home. Whenever Carolyn went to visit Peggy, she felt apologetic for not having a man who would buy her all these things, but she never seemed to be attracted to anyone steady or ambitious. She had been wondering how Kent would get along with the men of the family. Cecil and Ray were standing in a corner talking about gas mileage. Cecil, who was shorter than Peggy and was going bald, always worked on Dad's truck for free, and Ray usually agreed with Dad on politics to avoid an argument. Ray had an impressive government job in Frankfort. He had coordinated a ribbon-cutting ceremony when the toll road opened. What would Kent have to say to them? She could imagine him insisting that everyone go outside later to watch the sunset. Her father would think that was ridiculous. No one ever did that on a farm, but it was the sort of thing Kent would think of. Yet she knew that spontaneity was what she liked in him.

Deedee and Jonathan, who were ten and six, came inside then and immediately began shaking the presents under the tree. All the children were wearing new jeans and cowboy shirts, Carolyn noticed.

"Why are y'all so quiet?" she asked. "I thought kids whooped and hollered on Christmas."

"They've been up since four," said Iris. She took a cigarette from her purse and accepted a light from Cecil. Exhaling smoke, she said to Carolyn, "We heard Kent was coming." Before Carolyn could reply, Iris scolded the children for shaking the packages. She seemed nervous.

"He's supposed to be here by noon," said Carolyn.

"There's somebody now. I hear a car."

"It might be Dad, with Pappy."

It was Laura Jean, showing off Jim Walsh as though he were a splendid Christmas gift she had just received.

"Let me kiss everybody!" she cried, as the women rushed toward her. Laura Jean had not been home in four months.

"Merry Christmas!" Jim said in a booming, official-sounding voice, something like a TV announcer, Carolyn thought. He embraced all the women and then, with a theatrical gesture, he handed Mom a bottle of Rebel Yell bourbon and a carton of boiled custard, which he took from a shopping bag. The bourbon was in a decorative Christmas box.

Mom threw up her hands. "Oh, no, I'm afraid I'll be a alky-holic."

"Oh, that's ridiculous, Mom," said Laura Jean, taking Jim's coat. "A couple of drinks a day are good for your heart."

Jim insisted on getting coffee cups from a kitchen cabinet and mixing some boiled custard and bourbon. When he handed a cup to Mom, she puckered up her face.

"Law, don't let the preacher in," she said, taking a sip. "Boy, that sends my blood pressure up."

Carolyn waved away the drink that Jim offered her. "I don't start this early in the day," she said, feeling confused.

Jim was a large, dark-haired man with a neat little beard, like a bird's nest cupped on his chin. He had a northern accent. When he hugged her, Carolyn caught a whiff of cologne, something sweet, like chocolate syrup. Last summer, when Laura Jean had brought him home for the first time, she had made a point of kissing and hugging him in front of everyone. Dad had virtually ignored him. Now Carolyn saw that Jim was telling Cecil that he always bought Gulf gas. Red-faced, Ray accepted a cup of boiled custard. Carolyn fled to the kitchen and began grating cheese for potatoes au gratin. She dreaded Kent's arrival.

When Dad arrived with Pappy, Cecil and Jim helped set up the wheelchair in a corner. Afterward, Dad and Jim shook hands, and Dad refused Jim's offer of bourbon. From the kitchen, Carolyn could see Dad hugging Laura Jean, not letting go. She went into the living room to greet her grandfather.

"They roll me in this buggy too fast," he said when she kissed his forehead.

Carolyn hoped he wouldn't notice the bottle of bourbon, but she knew he never missed anything. He was so deaf people had given up talking to him. Now the children tiptoed around him, looking at him with awe. Somehow, Carolyn expected the children to notice that she was alone, like Pappy.

At ten minutes of one, the telephone rang. Peggy answered and handed the receiver to Carolyn. "It's Kent," she said.

Kent had not left the lake yet. "I just got here an hour ago," he told Carolyn. "I had to take my sister over to my mother's."

"Is the boat okay?"

"Yeah. Just a little scraped paint. I'll be ready to go in a little while." He hesitated, as though waiting for assurance that the invitation was real.

"This whole gang's ready to eat," Carolyn said. "Can't you hurry?" She should have remembered the way he tended to get sidetracked. Once it took them three hours to get to Paducah, because he kept stopping at antique shops.

After she hung up the telephone, her mother asked, "Should I put the rolls in to brown yet?"

"Wait just a little. He's just now leaving the lake."

"When's this Kent feller coming?" asked Dad impatiently, as he peered into the kitchen. "It's time to eat."

"He's on his way," said Carolyn.

"Did you tell him we don't wait for stragglers?"

"No."

"When the plate rattles, we eat."

"I know."

Bobbie Ann Mason lives in Pennsylvania and is working on a collection of short stories.

"Did you tell him that?"

"No, I didn't!" cried Carolyn, irritated.

When they were alone in the kitchen, Carolyn's mother said to her, "Your dad's not hisself today. He's fit to be tied about Laura Jean bringing that guy down here again. And him bringing that whiskey."

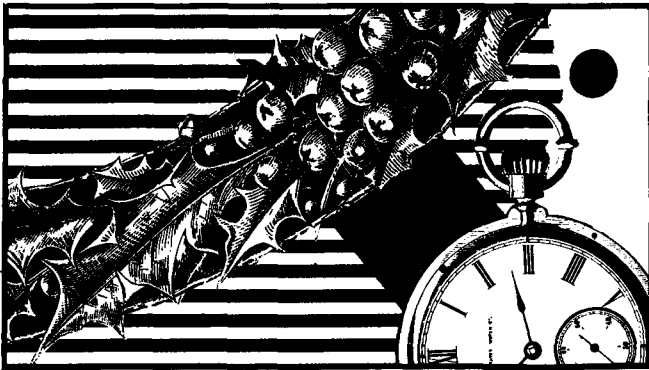
"That was uncalled for," Carolyn agreed. She had noticed that Mom had set her cup of eggnog in the refrigerator.

"Besides, he's not too happy about that Kent Ballard you're running around with."

"What's it to him?"

"You know how he always was. He don't think anybody's good enough for one of his little girls, and he's afraid you'll get mistreated again. He don't think Kent's very dependable."

"I guess Kent's proving Dad's point."



CAROLYN'S SISTER IRIS HAD DARK BROWN EYES, unique in the family. When Carolyn was small, she tried to say "Iris's eyes" once and called them "Irish eyes," confusing them with a song their mother sometimes sang, "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling." Thereafter, they always teased Iris about her smiling Irish eyes. Today Iris was not smiling. Carolyn found her in a bedroom smoking, holding an ashtray in her hand.

"I drew your name," Carolyn told her. "I got you something I wanted myself."

"Well, if I don't want it, I guess I'll have to give it to you."

"What's wrong with you today?"

"Ray and me's getting a separation," said Iris.

"Really?" Carolyn was startled by the note of glee in her response. Actually, she told herself later, it was because she was glad her sister, whom she saw infrequently, had confided in her.

"The thing of it is, I had to beg him to come today, for Mom and Dad's sake. It'll kill them. Don't let on, will you?"

"I won't. What are you going to do?"

"I don't know. He's already moved out."

"Are you going to stay in Frankfort?"

"I don't know. I have to work things out."

Mom stuck her head in the door. "Well, is Kent coming or not?"

"He said he'd be here," said Carolyn.

"Your dad's about to have a duck with a rubber tail. He can't stand to wait on a meal."

"Well, let's go ahead then. Kent can eat when he gets here."

When Mom left, Iris said, "Aren't you and Kent getting along?"

"I don't know. He said he'd come today, but I have a feeling he doesn't really want to."

"To hell with men." Iris laughed and stubbed out her cigarette. "Just look at us—didn't we turn out awful? First your divorce. Now me. And Laura Jean bringing that guy down. Daddy can't stand him. Did you see the look he gave him?"

"Laura Jean's got a lot more nerve than I've got," said Carolyn, nodding. "I could wring Kent's neck for being late. Well, none of us can do anything right—except Peggy."

"Daddy's precious little angel," said Iris mockingly. "Come on, we'd better get in there and help."

While Mom went to change her blouse and put on lipstick, the sisters brought the food into the dining room. Two tables had been put together. Peggy cut the ham with an electric knife, and Carolyn filled the iced-tea glasses.

"Pappy gets buttermilk and Stevie gets Coke," Peggy directed her.

"I know," said Carolyn, almost snapping.

As the family sat down, Carolyn realized that no one ever asked Pappy to "turn thanks" anymore at holiday dinners. He was sitting there expectantly, as if waiting to be asked. Mom cut up his ham into small bits. Carolyn waited for a car to drive up, the phone to ring. The TV was still on.

"Y'all dig in," said Mom. "Jim? Make sure you try some of these dressed eggs like I fix."

"I thought your new boyfriend was coming," said Cecil to Carolyn.

"So did I!" said Laura Jean. "That's what you wrote me."

Everyone looked at Carolyn as she explained. She looked away.

"You're looking at that pitiful tree," Mom said to her. "I just know it don't show up good from the road."

"No, it looks fine." No one had really noticed the tree. Carolyn seemed to be seeing it for the first time in years—broken red-plastic reindeer, Styrofoam snowmen with crumbling top hats, silver walnuts, which she remembered painting when she was about twelve.

Dad began telling a joke about some monks who had taken a vow of silence. At each Christmas dinner, he said, one monk was allowed to speak.

"Looks like your vocal cords would rust out," said Cheryl.

"Shut up, Cheryl. Granddaddy's trying to tell something," said Cecil.

"So the first year it was the first monk's turn to talk, and you know what he said? He said, 'These taters is lumpy.'"

When several people laughed, Stevie asked, "Is that the joke?"

Carolyn was baffled. Her father had never told a joke at the table in his life. He sat at the head of the table, looking out past the family at the cornfield through the picture window.

"Pay attention, now," he said. "The second year Christmas rolled around again and it was the second monk's turn to say something. He said, 'You know, I think you're right. The taters is lumpy.'"

Laura Jean and Jim laughed loudly.

"Reach me some light bread," said Pappy. Mom passed the dish around the table to him.

"And so the third year," Dad continued, "the third monk got to say something. What he said—" Dad was suddenly overcome with mirth—"what he said was, 'If y'all don't shut up arguing about them taters, I'm going to leave this place!'"

After the laughter died, Mom said, "Can you imagine anybody not a-talking all year long?"

"That's the way monks are, Mom," said Laura Jean. "Monks are economical with everything. They're not wasteful, not even with words."

"The Trappist monks are really an outstanding group," said Jim. "And they make excellent bread. No preservatives."

Cecil and Peggy stared at Jim.

"You're not eating, Dad," said Carolyn. She was sitting between him and the place set for Kent. The effort at telling the joke seemed to have taken her father's appetite.

"He ruined his dinner on nigger toes," said Mom.

"Dottie Barlow got a Barbie doll for Christmas and it's black," Cheryl said.

"Dottie Barlow ain't black, is she?" asked Cecil.

"No."

"That's funny," said Peggy. "Why would they give her a black Barbie doll?"

"She just wanted it."

Abruptly, Dad left the table, pushing back his plate. He sat down in the recliner chair in front of the TV. The Blue-Gray game was beginning, and Cecil and Ray were hurriedly finishing in order to join him. Carolyn took out second helpings of ham and Jello salad, feeling as though she was eating for Kent in his absence. Jim was taking seconds of everything, complimenting Mom. Mom apologized for not having fancy napkins. Then Laura Jean described a photography course she had taken. She had been photographing close-ups of car parts—fenders, headlights, mud flaps.

"That sounds goofy," said one of the children, Deedee.

Suddenly Pappy spoke. "Use to, the menfolks would eat first, and the children separate. The womenfolks would eat last, in the kitchen."

"You know what I could do with you all, don't you?" said Mom, shaking her fist at him. "I could set up a plank out in the field for y'all to eat on." She laughed.

"Times are different now, Pappy," said Iris loudly. "We're just as good as the men."

"She gets that from television," said Ray, with an apologetic laugh.

Carolyn noticed Ray's glance at Iris. Just then Iris matter-of-factly plucked an eyelash from Ray's cheek. It was as though she had momentarily forgotten about the separation.



LATER, AFTER THE GIFTS WERE OPENED, JIM helped clear the tables. Kent still had not come. The baby slept, and Laura Jean, Jim, Peggy, and Mom played a Star Trek board game at the dining room table, while Carolyn and Iris played Battlestar Galactica with Cheryl and Deedee. The other men were quietly engrossed in a football game, a blur of sounds. No one had mentioned Kent's absence, but, after the children had distributed the gifts, Carolyn refused to tell them what was in the lone package left under the tree. It was the most extravagantly wrapped of all the presents, with an immense ribbon, not a stick-on bow. An icicle had dropped on it, and it reminded Carolyn of an abandoned float from a parade.

At a quarter to three, Kent telephoned. He was still at the lake. "The gas stations are all closed," he said. "I couldn't get any gas."

"We already ate and opened the presents," said Carolyn.

"Here I am, stranded. Not a thing I can do about it."

Kent's voice was shaky and muffled, and Carolyn suspected he had been drinking. She did not know what to say, in front of the family. She chattered idly, while she played with a ribbon from a package. The baby was awake, turning dials and knobs on a Busy Box. On TV, the Blues picked up six yards on an end sweep. Carolyn fixed her eyes on the tilted star at the top of the tree. Kent was saying something about Santa Claus.

"They wanted me to play Santy at Mama's house for the littl'uns. I said—you know what I said? 'Bah, humbug!' Did I ever tell you what I've got against Christmas?"

"Maybe not." Carolyn's back stiffened against the wall.

"When I was little bitty, Santa Claus came to town. I was about five. I was all fired up to go see Santy, and Mama took me, but we were late, and he was about to leave. I had to run across the courthouse square to get to him. He was giving away suckers, so I ran as hard as I could. He was climbing up on the fire engine—are you listening?"

"Unh-huh." Carolyn was watching her mother, who was folding Christmas paper to save for next year.

Kent said, "I reached up and pulled at his old red pants leg, and he looked down at me, and you know what he said?"

"No, what?"

"He said, 'Piss off, kid.'"

"Really?"

"Would I lie to you?"

"I don't know."

"Do you want to hear the rest of my hard-luck story?"

"Not now."

"Oh, I forgot this was long distance. I'll call you tomorrow. Maybe I'll go paint the boat. That's what I'll do! I'll go paint it right this minute."

After Carolyn hung up the telephone, her mother said, "I think my Oriental casserole was a failure. I used the wrong kind of mushroom soup. It called for cream of mushroom and I used golden mushroom."

"Won't you *ever* learn, Mom?" cried Carolyn. "You always cook too much. You make *such* a big deal—"

Mom said, "What happened with Kent this time?"



108 EAST NINETEENTH

Mother, the sweet peas have gushed out of
the ground where you fell, where you lay that day
when the doctor came, while your wash kept flapping
on the line across the back yard. I stood
and looked out a long time toward The Fair Grounds.
The Victrola in the living room used to play
"Nola," and the room spun toward a center
that our neighborhood clustered around. Nasturtiums
you put in our salad would brighten our tummies,
you said, and we careened off like trains
to play tag in alfalfa fields till the moon
came out and you called us home with "Popcorn
for all who come." But that was long
before you said, "Jesus is calling me home."

And Father, when your summons came and you quietly
left, no one could hold you
back. You didn't need to talk
because your acts for years had already prayed.
For you both, may God guide my hand in its pious
act, from far off, across this page.

—William Stafford

"He couldn't get gas. He forgot the gas stations were closed."

"Jim and Laura Jean didn't have any trouble getting gas," said Peggy, looking up from the game.

"We tanked up yesterday," said Laura Jean.

"Of course you did," said Carolyn distractedly. "You always think ahead."

"It's your time," Cheryl said, handing Carolyn the Battlestar Galactica toy. "I did lousy."

"Not as lousy as I did," said Iris.

Carolyn tried to concentrate on shooting enemy missiles, raining through space. Her sisters seemed far away, like the spaceships. She was aware of the men watching football, their hands in action as they followed an exciting play. Even though Pappy had fallen asleep, with his blanket in his lap he looked like a king on a throne. Carolyn thought of the quiet accommodation her father had made to his father-in-law, just as Cecil and Ray had done with Dad, and her ex-husband had tried to do once. But Cecil had bought his way in, and now Ray was getting out. Kent had stayed away. Jim, the newcomer, was with the women, playing Star Trek as if his life depended upon it. Carolyn was glad now that Kent had not come. The story he had told made her angry, and his pity for his childhood made her think of something Pappy had often said—"Christmas is for children." Earlier, she had listened in amazement while Cheryl listed on her fingers the gifts she had received that morning: a watch, a stereo, a nightgown, hot curls, perfume, candles, a sweater, a calculator, a jewelry box, a ring. Now Carolyn saw Kent's boat as his toy, more important to him than the family obligations of the holiday.

Mom was saying, "I wanted to make a Christmas tablecloth out of red checks with green fringe. You wouldn't think knit would do for a tablecloth, but Hattie Smoot has the prettiest one."

"You can do incredible things with knit," said Jim with sudden enthusiasm. The shirt Mom had made him was bonded knit.

"Who's Hattie Smoot?" asked Laura Jean. She was caressing the back of Jim's neck, as though soothing his nerves.

Carolyn laughed when her mother began telling Jim and Laura Jean about Hattie Smoot's operation. Jim listened attentively, leaning forward with his elbows on the table, and asked eager questions, his eyes as alert as Pappy's.

"Is she telling a joke?" Cheryl asked Carolyn.

"No. I'm not laughing at you, Mom," Carolyn said, touching her mother's hand. She felt relieved that the

anticipation of Christmas had ended. Still laughing, she said, "Pour me some of that Rebel Yell, Jim. It's time."

"I'm with you," Jim said, jumping up.

In the kitchen, Carolyn located a clean spoon while Jim washed some cups. Carolyn couldn't find the cup Mom had left in the refrigerator. As she took out the carton of boiled custard, Jim said, "It must be a very difficult day for you."

Carolyn was startled. His tone was unexpectedly kind, genuine. She was struck suddenly by what he must know about her, because of his intimacy with her sister. She knew nothing about him. When he smiled, she saw a gold cap on a molar, shining like a Christmas ornament. She managed to say, "It can't be any picnic for you, either. Kent didn't want to put up with us."

"Too bad he couldn't get gas."

"I don't think he wanted to get gas."

"Then you're better off without him." When Jim looked at her, Carolyn felt that he must be examining her resemblance to Laura Jean. He said, "I think your family's great."

Carolyn laughed nervously. "We're hard on you. God, you're brave to come down here like this."

"Well, Laura Jean's worth it."

They took the boiled custard and cups into the dining room. As Carolyn sat down, her nephew Jonathan begged her to tell what was in the gift left under the tree.

"I can't tell," she said.

"Why not?"

"I'm saving it till next year, in case I draw some man's name."

"I hope it's mine," said Jonathan.

Jim stirred bourbon into three cups of boiled custard, and gave one to Carolyn and one to Laura Jean. The others had declined. Then he leaned back in his chair—more relaxed now—and squeezed Laura Jean's hand. Carolyn wondered what they said to each other when they were alone, in St. Louis. She knew with certainty that they would not be economical with words, like the monks in the story. She longed to be with them, to hear what they would say. She noticed her mother picking at a hangnail, quietly ignoring the bourbon. Looking at the bottle's gift box, which showed an old-fashioned scene, children on sleds in the snow, Carolyn thought of Kent's boat again. She felt she was in that snowy scene now with Laura Jean and Jim, sailing in Kent's boat into the winter breeze, into falling snow. She thought of how silent it was out on the lake, as though the whiteness of the snow were the absence of sound.

"Cheers!" she said to Jim, lifting her cup. □

Post Modern architects find social consciences inconvenient

PRIVATE JOKES IN PUBLIC PLACES

BY MOSHE SAFDIE

STUDENTS ALWAYS HAVE THEIR HEROES, AND A WALK through the architectural-design studio at any major university gives a clear indication of who is "in." On a browsing tour today, we would find a surprising mixture of forms and styles. We might first come upon some drawings—delicately rendered in pink, peach, mauve, and green, variously using elements from ancient Egyptian architecture, axially arranged stepping forms, triangles, openings, and keystones—echoing the work of Michael Graves, the Princeton-based architect. Nearby, we would be likely to see someone working on a model made of white cardboard walls, columns, and beams. At first, we would think the student had been charged with rebuilding a structure in the International Style of the 1930s. A closer look would show complex geometries and spatial orders, with planes and curved surfaces interpenetrating the whole, coming together with the delicacy of a house of cards. As in the work of such architects as Richard Meier and Peter Eisenman, there would be a sense of structurelessness and of fugal variations on a theme of the International Style.

In great contrast, we might find a student busy drawing a project elements of which appeared to be wholesale reproductions of parts of buildings ranging from Art Deco to Neoclassicism to Italian Baroque façades, or even to a little piece of Hadrian's villa. Such parts would be integrated into what appeared to be an otherwise conventional plan, with surfaces carefully decorated with moldings, columns with any of various capitals, and other classical and pseudo-classical paraphernalia, recalling a preoccupation with such elements by the New York architect Robert A. M. Stern. Next to him might be a student whose project is an urban piazza treated as a stage set, with Italian scenery as a backdrop, as in the work of Charles Moore.

Somewhere in the studio we would certainly find a student using his project as an opportunity for an ironic statement—architecture as commentary and metaphor. His project might be a little museum in Cambridge whose ground floor would be built with masonry, as if it

had existed for some time, and whose upper floor would be built with sheet metal, suggesting that it was a later, temporary, addition. If asked why he did that, the student might shrug his shoulders—or offer an eloquent, if vague, explanation of the anti-establishment gesture such a building would make. He would be echoing gestures by such leading architects as Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, who have designed stores to look like a Christmas package or an oversize dollhouse (a commentary on consumerism?), or by Stanley Tigerman, whose proposal for a Best Products store was an oversize split-level suburban house, including a giant mannequin of a welcoming housewife at the door.

In another section of the studio, we would come upon a model for a large urban complex whose streets were lined with identical buildings. Rows of columns and repetitive window patterns would define the street edge, and lead to a semicircular piazza. The memory of Albert Speer and Mussolini's Rome would be immediate, but you would discover upon further inquiry that the influence is much more recent—the work of the acclaimed Italian architect Aldo Rossi.

Why such a diverse and unlikely group of architects and their devoted followers have come to be categorized in a single package, identified as Post Modernism, defies one's understanding, until one learns that the participants themselves have done much to create the image of a united movement, and that despite extreme formal differences in their output, the architects who inspire these students are in fact united by some common values, attitudes, and philosophies.

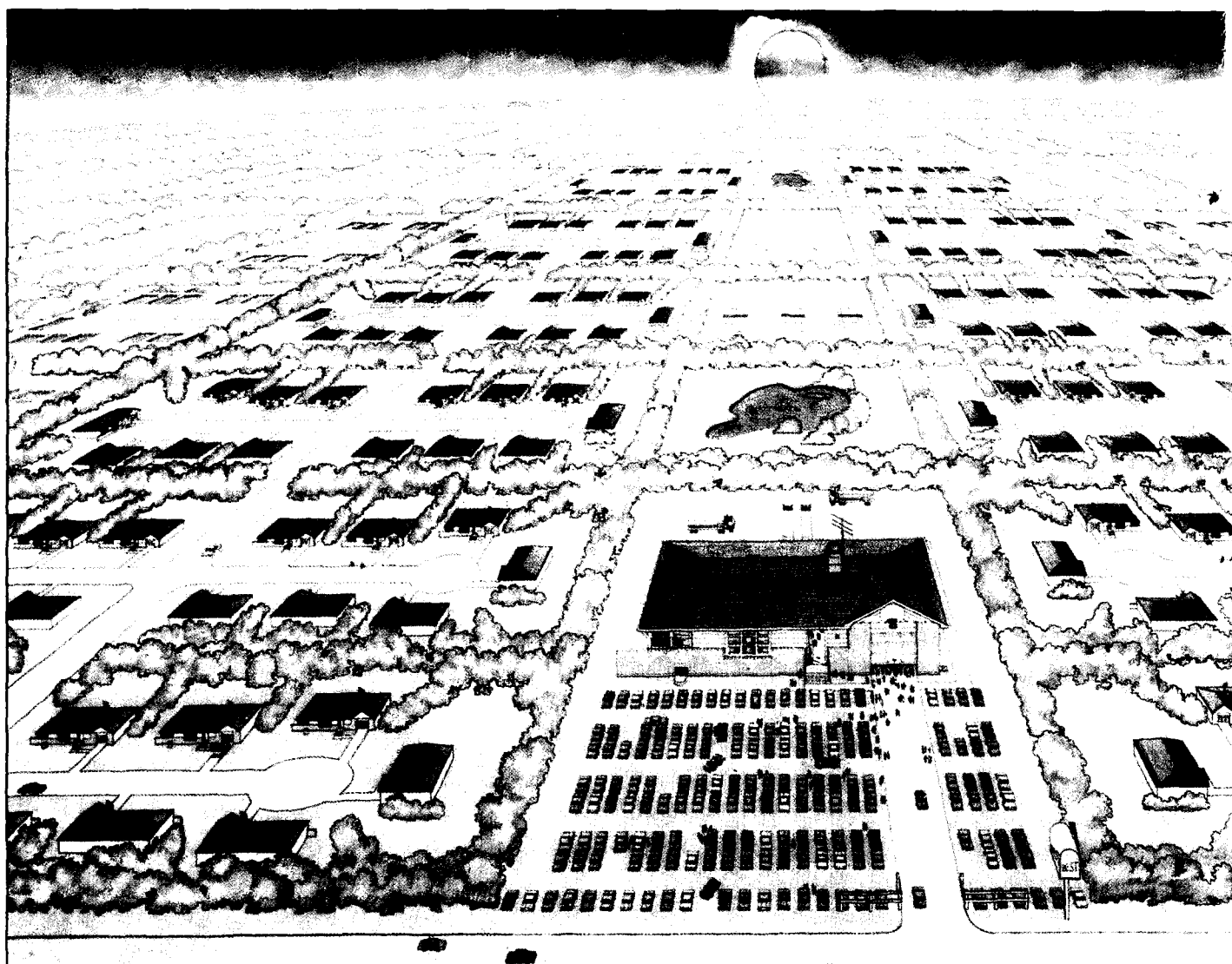
A capsule summary of the development of modern architecture might put things in context. The beginning of the century, extending into the thirties, saw the birth of the Modern movement. The Moderns included many pivotal figures whose interests and backgrounds diverged—such as Gropius, Le Corbusier, Oud, Mendelssohn, and Mies van der Rohe—but who were above all else socially committed. Organized around the Bauhaus and the Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne, the movement broke with the past—the tyranny, as the architects understood it, of eclecticism and of architecture as an art for the privileged few—and concerned itself, perhaps for the first time in the history of architecture, with the environment of everyone. Housing,

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NORMAN MCGRATH



Charles Moore designed mock-classical façades for his Piazza d'Italia in New Orleans



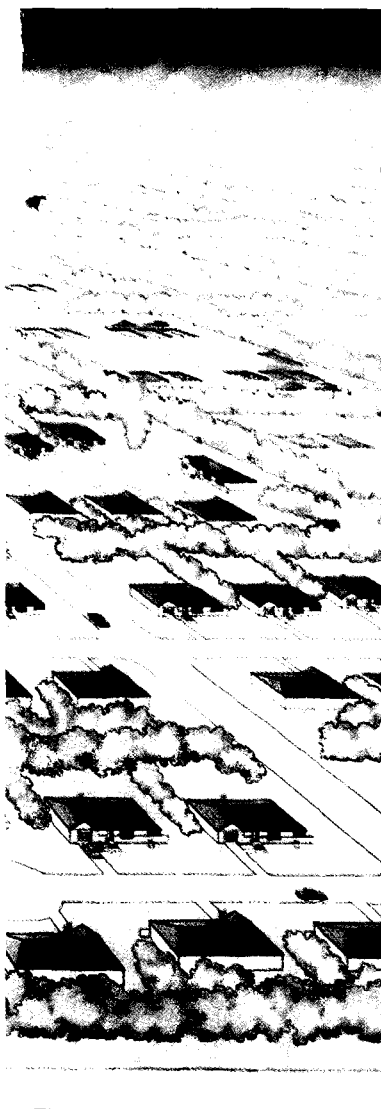
urbanism, styles of living, new modes of education and recreation, technology, and industrialization all became issues in what was an essentially optimistic thrust.

The new movement was not without its contradictions. There was the puritanical cleansing process rooted in leftist ideology. Ornament was a crime, Adolf Loos declared, as buildings increasingly reflected. And while philosophically the Moderns were committed to the idea that form—and style—will grow and evolve out of the honest expression of building processes and structure, they developed their own visual formulas—white planar structures, interpenetrating volumes, cantilevered curved balconies, horizontal strip windows, shiplike details—which before long created a new formal tyranny.

Although they were committed to city life, the Moderns rejected the congested gridiron city of the past and replaced it with models of green meadows interspersed with skyscrapers. But the essence of urban life—meeting places, markets, piazzas, even streets—had been eliminated without proper substitutes. All this must be understood, however, in the context of the emergence of a radi-

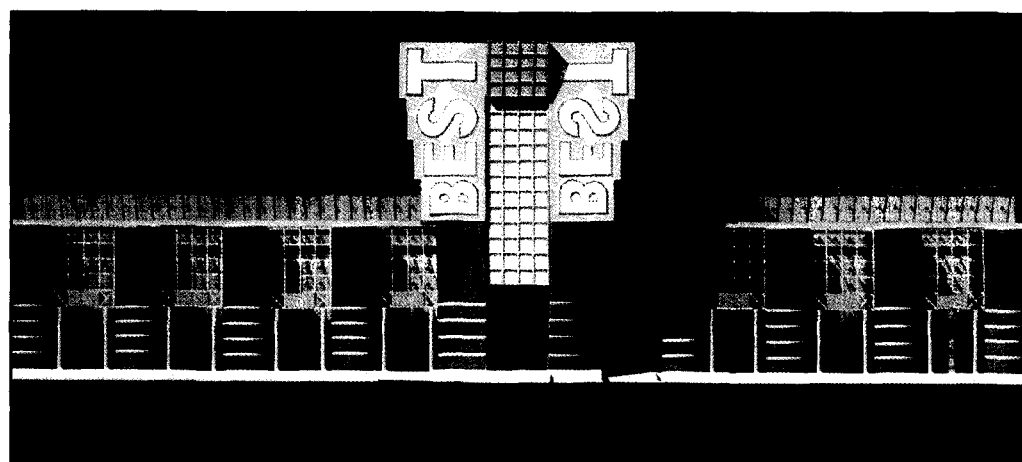
cal movement: the Moderns were committed to the transformation of an entire value system of their time.

They seemed to have won their battle with the Old Guard when the destruction of World War II brought about the opportunity for realization of their dreams. But as neighborhoods and cities such as Rotterdam, London, and Dresden were rebuilt, and brand-new cities outside Europe (Brasilia, Chandigarh) were created from scratch, the elation subsided and was replaced by a sense of disappointment: the utopias were in many ways inferior to the old towns. The communities lacked variety and richness, and suggested instead a sense of bureaucracy and standardization. One lived in a “project,” not a house. The individual buildings generated the response of “cold,” “sterile,” “clinical”—all summed up so beautifully in Jacques Tati’s movie *Mon Oncle*. By the sixties, the notions of towers in the park, segregated land use, and even garden cities had been discredited. It was clear that social commitment was not enough. Architects needed a deeper understanding of how to make an environment with the complexity and richness the public craved. In



WOLFGANG HOYT/ESTO

Three designs for Best Products showrooms. At left, Stanley Tigerman's oversize suburban house with a 22-foot mannequin of a welcoming housewife at the door; customers enter through the "broken" garage door. Above, Robert A. M. Stern's temple façade, whose cutout trophies (above the columns) show the progression from courtship to procreation. Below, Michael Graves's design, which allows for other shops.



WOLFGANG HOYT/ESTO

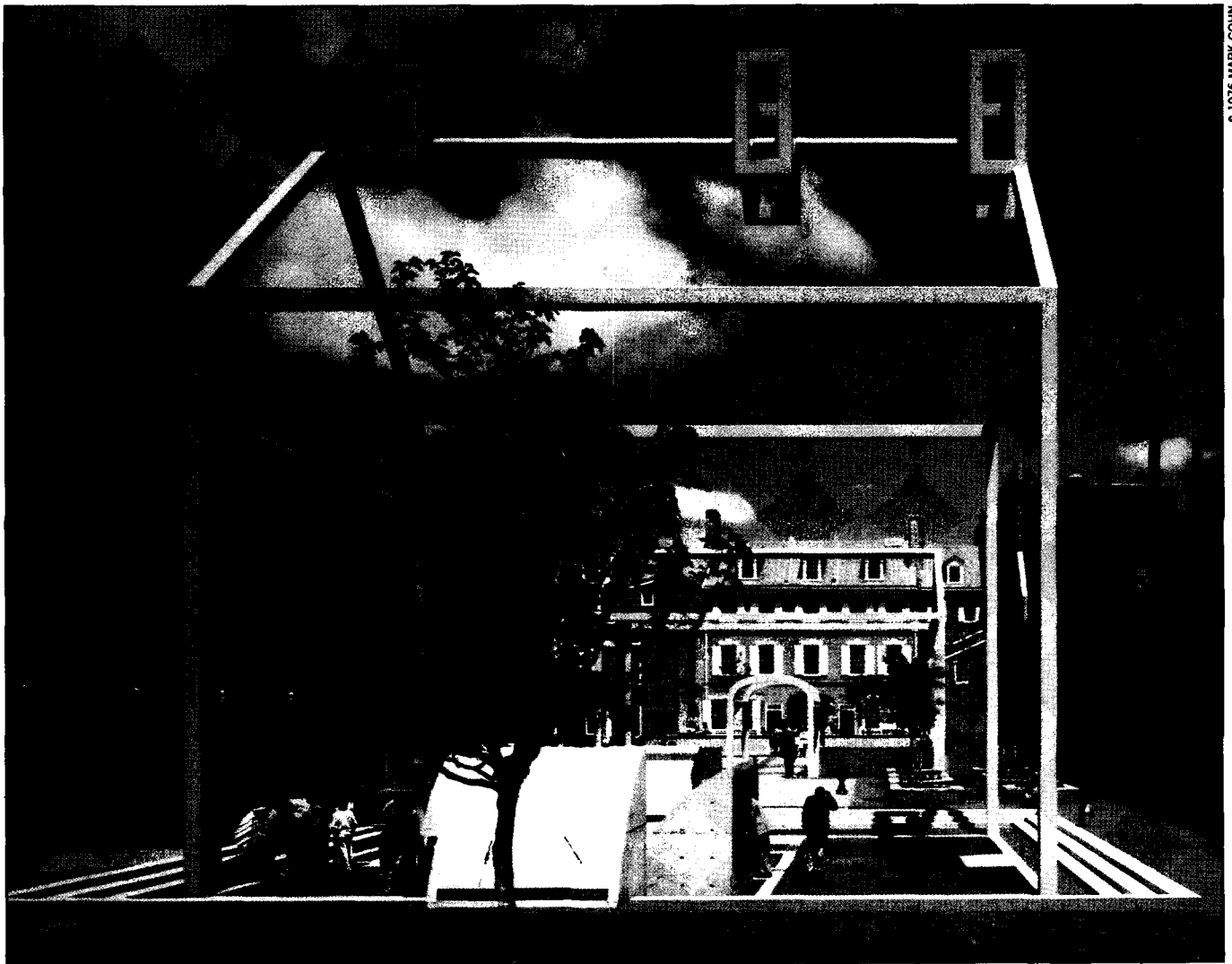
America, this need was aggravated by the dominance for several decades of the severe style of Mies van der Rohe and the spreading of the gospel by followers such as Philip Johnson, the young Eero Saarinen, and others.

The public did not like steel-and-glass boxes. The puritanism of the Modern movement suppressed the natural human desire to celebrate and decorate, to take delight in ornament. But it was not only ornament that was lacking. "Social housing," as it was called in Europe ("public housing" here), failed to eradicate poverty, or even to make the life of the poor any better. Instead of devising cheaper and more efficient construction technology, architects designed anonymous, standardized, and repetitive prefabricated projects that sprang up all over Europe, from Moscow to the British Isles.

In the process of rejection of the past, urbanism suffered a drastic blow. Rejecting the street and the public square in their traditional forms, the Moderns placed buildings in open landscapes, creating open space that was less park than wasteland, destroying the connective tissues that formed urban life, and reinforcing the notion

that architecture was the design of objects and not the design of the urban whole. In the triumph of Modernism, regionalism was ignored. The very term "International Style" suggested that buildings in the Nubian Desert, in the Middle East, and in northern Canada had much in common.

Aside from the revision of Modernism, architects in the seventies were faced with a new set of constraints. The years were basically ones of severe recession. Public funds for buildings were cut drastically. Construction, particularly of public housing, came almost to a halt. The cost and scarcity of energy, too, added to the economic upheaval, as did interest rates and the virtual disappearance of conventional mortgage financing. In these gloomy circumstances during the seventies, a substantial number of architects remained only partially employed or unemployed. Faced on one side with economic constraints that seemed to make it impossible to maneuver and on the other with an agenda of unresolved issues inherited from the previous generation, architects found it seductive to change the rules of the game.



© 1976 MARK COHN

Venturi, Rauch and Scott Brown's Franklin Court, a park in the Olde City section of Philadelphia

THERE WERE TWO EARLY REACTIONS TO DISAPPOINTMENTS with the Modern movement, one typically European, the other typically American: one sociopolitical, the other stylistic. In Europe, the second generation of architects—Aldo van Eyck in the Netherlands, Giancarlo di Carlo in Italy, and the Smithsons in England—gathered, in what became known as Team 10, in an attempt to begin articulating where the Modern movement had fallen short. They discussed aspects of the environment that the Modern movement ignored: the meaning of tradition, the lessons to be learned from the vernacular and indigenous architecture they found in the streets and countryside around them, and fundamental concepts such as territoriality, gathering places, and “gateway”—the sense of entering a community or house. But their underlying attitude was of reaffirmation of basic human needs in architecture.

A number of American architects began to “enrich” modern architecture by wrapping buildings with decorative grills, as Edward Durell Stone did in his design for the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India, or by talking

about the architecture of delight and introducing decorative pseudo-Gothic and Romanesque elements to buildings, as Minoru Yamasaki did in his design for the buildings at Wayne State University. Both architects were duly acknowledged in cover stories in *Time*.

These rumblings of dissatisfaction with the severity of Modernism were first given intellectual legitimacy and depth by Robert Venturi in his 1966 book, *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, which had an immediate impact. Venturi abolished the Moderns’ taboos. He exalted the richness of Renaissance and Baroque architecture, the desire for decoration, the intellectual pleasure of mannerism in architecture, irony and metaphor, and the unappreciated value of vulgarity—public taste as expressed in our suburbs and commercial highway strips.

Venturi’s writings attracted many followers. By the early 1970s the followers had a name—the Post Modernists—and included architects from all over America, Europe, and Japan. Even Philip Johnson jumped on the bandwagon, with his AT&T Building, in New York City,

supporting the new eclecticism not only in his own work but as the juror of several competitions, notably the controversial one for the Public Service Building in Portland, Oregon. Michael Graves's design, which was concerned mostly with façade composition, was chosen over those by Mitchell/Giurgola of New York and Arthur Erickson of Vancouver, which were concerned instead with the environment and people's lives within it.

UNLIKE TEAM 10, WHICH BUILT UPON THE ACHIEVEMENTS of the founders of the Modern movement by keeping their ideals but outlining their deficiencies in concept and understanding, the Post Modernists see themselves as the bearers of a new gospel: the Modern movement is dead and a new era of understanding architecture has arrived. There is not much that architecture can do about social issues, the Post Modernists say: the housing projects of the thirties, forties, and fifties proved that architecture did not erase, or even ease, the conditions of poverty and alienation. So why not turn to what architects really do well—pure design? Technology has not solved anything—it certainly didn't make buildings any cheaper—and the Modernist doctrine that visual pleasure would result from the expression of the structural system led nowhere. Now architects can explore pure form, unencumbered by building process or by program (clients' requirements).

When architects hoped to evolve building forms that would be instruments of social change, they permitted themselves to be the interpreters of a client's requirements and to mold buildings to their own interpretation, often with far-reaching economic and operational consequences. More recently, governments, corporate clients, and developers have increasingly narrowed the architect's involvement with program definition. Developers tell architects that an office building shall be no more nor less than 25,000 square feet per floor on a five-foot grid; they supply precise definitions of the plan and form of a hotel, government complex, or residential building. For an architect with social concerns and ambitions to have an impact on his culture, this situation is intolerable. But Post Modernist doctrine diffuses this frustration by redefining the architect's role. Students can relax about the packaged building formulas everyone around them seems to be saddled with, and enjoy the makeup job. It does not matter that their contribution under such circumstances can be only skin-deep. New criteria of subtlety become important: making a glass curtain-wall with a new type of mirror or polychrome glass panels, or specifying colored rather than aluminum mullions, becomes a significant act worthy of appreciation.

Post Modernist doctrine applies to problems that are not socially and economically charged. By designing a house for an indulgent client rather than for a community of diverse people, for example, the architect avoids the

conflicts between economics and amenities and between building form and energy consumption. He chooses problems in which the program is sufficiently vague to impose the least number of constraints. Architects have even begun drawing individual houses, sometimes for no client, no real site, numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4 (as Peter Eisenman does), or "A Kosher Kitchen for a Suburban Jewish American Princess" resembling a bagel, for which Stanley Tigerman received a *Progressive Architecture* design award. Being academic and intellectual, the Post Modernists also see architecture as an opportunity for commentary. Having stated that the Moderns avoided symbolic gestures, Post Modernist doctrine confuses genuine universal symbols—as well as ones that are immediately meaningful to people from a particular culture—with private symbols that are meaningless to the public. Thus, for example, a gold-anodized TV antenna placed over the roof of a home for the elderly (by Robert Venturi) is a gesture that might be meaningful to a limited circle of architects, but certainly one that lacks universality. Students, however, find solace in this introvertedness, since it is easier to look to one's immediate circle than to study and penetrate one's society for meaningful symbols.

THE CHANGE IS RADICAL. THROUGH MUCH OF THE history of architecture, architects believed style was rooted in the process of building and in the spatial order that expressed life-style. Style was the synthesis of how buildings came together, how they were used, and how they interacted with the land. Perhaps one of the most articulate architects on the subject was Frank Lloyd Wright, who, in *An Organic Architecture* and in his buildings, demonstrated the inseparability of these ingredients. Today we are told that these connections are nonsensical—unnecessary constraints and limits. Philip Johnson says, "There are no rules, surely no certainties in any of the arts. There is only the feeling of a wonderful freedom," and is echoed by Frank Gehry: "I try to rid myself . . . of the burden of culture. . . . I want to be open-ended. There are no rules, no right or wrong."

The history of architecture and urbanism, the understanding of the evolution of building form, and the ability to derive lessons from both for building today have always been essential ingredients of an architect's education. Even in the early decades of the century, when history was de-emphasized, architects never failed to draw upon their cultural heritage. Le Corbusier explored the buildings of ancient Greece and the Mediterranean vernacular. Louis Kahn was fascinated by medieval Europe. Bernard Rudofsky made us conscious of indigenous buildings—architecture without architects. Frank Lloyd Wright was fascinated with and drew upon the tradition of Japanese building. It would seem obvious that the choice of models has much to say about the values and

attitudes of each particular school. The fascination with indigenous building is a commitment to adaptability, to an architecture emerging as clearly and as unequivocally as form in nature. The fascination with medieval building cannot be disassociated from the concept of the master builder and collective building efforts of the time.

Today, however, the student treats history as a bag of tricks. Rather than understand the causal as well as historical evolution of building and urbanism and the relation between context and form, he is allowed, indeed encouraged, to dive in and pick a motif out of history to be reproduced and elaborated. Thus we find parts or wholes of buildings—or sometimes even details, such as moldings—reproduced and transformed in scale, not only out of context but without the understanding of what brought them about in the first place. Fashionable styles include late Renaissance, Mannerist, and Baroque architecture, with a sprinkling of Neoclassicism and touches of late-nineteenth-century eclecticism and Art Deco. What are we to learn about ourselves from the fascination with these models? There is, I believe, an obvious analogy between architects today and architects during the late Renaissance, when the natural evolution of building had been disrupted by an intellectual act: the adoption of a style, with its own formal building vocabulary, and the creation of the syntax of a culture. As happens in reaction to all arbitrary frameworks, sometimes imposed, sometimes voluntary, boredom gave birth to Mannerism—the willful playing of the game against the accepted rules.

IBELIEVE THAT POST MODERNISM HAS MERELY ABSORBED into its dogma current values in the worlds of art, fashion, and merchandising—the rise of narcissism, the hunger for novelty, and deep pessimism about the prospects for humanity that have descended upon us in the past decade.

This emphasis on trends began when Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson imported Modernism to America in their 1932 book, *The International Style*, managing to extract it from its political context. Modernism was treated as *style*, another trend, without the ideology that had given rise to it. The emphasis was on the visual images of modernity and not the social and political values that brought them about. This was consistent with the tradition of architectural education in America, where schools of architecture have generally been a part of the faculty of fine arts, not the faculty of engineering or urbanism, as is common in Europe.

The dichotomy between the flourishing of the visual arts in recent decades and the constant struggle of architects has frustrated architects. While “making it” was not always easy for a painter or sculptor, once support by critics and galleries was achieved—most often through great pains at self-promotion—an “anything goes” situa-

tion resulted. Artists were playing their own game. In collaboration with the critics, they were creating one school after another, one subculture after another, identifying themselves by “movements,” and establishing the market price. A delicate alliance among critic, artist, and merchandiser (the galleries) established the framework. Artists did not have to be socially useful, relevant, or politically conscious, nor did they have to deal with the impossible economic constraints of the era in order to achieve the gratification of self-expression.

It was perhaps inevitable that architects would adopt the methods of successful artists. It is no accident that the Post Modernists have their court critics: one could say that Vincent Scully, the Yale historian and critic, made Venturi, in the way that Clement Greenberg made Jackson Pollock. Architects began to confuse product (the built environment) with the means (the drawings produced for the purpose of building). Art galleries latched on to architects, discovering in their drawings a new market; architects reciprocated by treating their tools (drawings) as a marketable end in themselves. Surely the drawings of Frank Lloyd Wright and Le Corbusier were as beautiful as anything produced by contemporary architects, but it would have been inconceivable for these men to treat them as anything but vehicles for achieving the built environment. The dangers of basing appreciation of architecture on drawings are obvious. The standard for work conceived and fixed on paper differs radically from the standard for work that must stand the test of being lived in and aging.

It is actually surprising that a culture in which clothing, cars, and almost all designed objects are subject to constant manipulation through arbitrary changes in fashion and style has not had an earlier impact on architecture. Architecture remained surprisingly pure during the early decades of this century, perhaps because of the ideological and political convictions of its advocates. But if Calvin Klein or Yves Saint Laurent can create a trademark, a name, that is based sometimes on an identifiable personal style and sometimes on clever promotion of a personal image, why shouldn't architects?

Post Modernism is facilitated by the character of commercial life, but its deeper roots are in the decline of concern for the collective and the rise of obsessive concern with self and individuality, leading to a drastic imbalance between the private and public realms. The recent developments in art, architecture, and literature could not have taken place without focusing on the individual and his prerogatives. The artist's and architect's sense of social usefulness or plain usefulness, taken for granted through centuries of building and artistic activity, has now been replaced by a license to be arbitrary and introverted, and by a lessening of the burden to serve one's fellow beings. This has been said many times about the visual arts. It is now possible to say the same for architecture. □

ADVENT CALENDAR

Bethlehem in Germany,
Glitter on the sloping roofs,
Breadcrumbs on the windowsills,
Candles in the Christmas trees,
Hearths with pairs of empty shoes:
Panels of Nativity
Open paper scenes where doors
Open into other scenes,
Some recounted, some foretold.
Blizzard-sprinkled flakes of gold
Gleam from small interiors,
Picture-boxes in the stars
Open up like cupboard doors
In a cabinet Jesus built.

Southern German villagers,
Peasants in the mica frost,
See the comet streaming down,
Heavenly faces, each alone,
Faces lifted, startled, lost,
As if lightning lit the town.

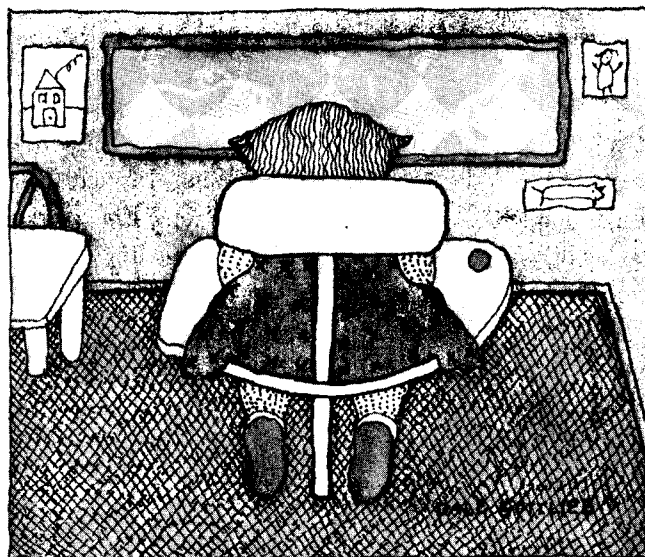
Sitting in an upstairs window
Patiently the village scholar
Raises his nearsighted face,
Interrupted by the star.
Left and right his hands lie stricken
Useless on his heavy book.
When I lift the paper door
In the ceiling of his study
One canary-angel glimmers,
Flitting in the candelabra,
Peers and quizzes him: Rabbi,
What are the spheres surmounted by?
But his lips are motionless.
Child, what are you asking for?
Look, he gazes past the roofs,
Gazes where the bitter North,
Stretched across the empty place,
Opens door by door by door.

This is childhood's shrunken door.
When I touch the glittering crumbs,
When I cry to be admitted,
No one answers, no one comes.

And the tailor's needle flashes
In mid-air with thread pulled tight,
Stitching a baptismal gown.
But the gown, the seventh door,
Turns up an interior
Hidden from the tailor's eyes:
Baby presents like the boxes
Angels hold on streets and stairways,
Wooden soldier, wooden sword,
Chocolate coins in crinkled gold,
Hints of something bought and sold,
Hints of murder in the stars.
Baby's gown is sown with glitter
Spread across the tailor's lap.
Up above his painted ceiling
Baby mouse's skeleton
Crumbles in the mouse's trap.

Leaning from the cliff of heaven,
Indicating whom he weeps for,
Joseph lifts his lamp above
The infant like a candle-crown.
Let my fingers touch the silence
Where the infant's father cries.
Give me entrance to the village
From my childhood where the doorways
Open pictures in the skies.
But when all the doors are open,
No one sees that I've returned.
When I cry to be admitted,
No one answers, no one comes.
Clinging to my fingers only
Pain, like glitter-bits adhering,
When I touch the shining crumbs.

—Gjertrud Schnackenberg



MELANIE AND THE PURPLE PEOPLE EATERS

A SHORT STORY BY IRVIN FAUST

“HORSEBLEEP?”

Horowitz looked into the phone and was positive he could see the thin, frowning teacher. She was even nodding.

“That’s what she said, Mr. Horowitz.”

“Miss Garaminta, are you *sure*?”

“I’m positive, Mr. Horowitz . . . Mr. Horowitz, if I may, I think our Bunny Development Specialist should chat with her.”

“Who?”

“Our Bunny—”

“Hold it. Just hold it.” He turned away from the phone, took three clearing breaths, returned to the phone, smiled into it. “Not yet, okay? I’ll get back to you, Miss Garaminta.”

“Don’t wait too long,” Miss Garaminta suggested.

“I won’t. Oh, I won’t. I appreciate your concern, I really do.”

“Thank you, Mr. Horowitz. Have a nice day.”

Horowitz looks at his desk, the wall, the clock, the window. He deep-breathes again, wads the latest inter-office nonsense, loops it toward the waste basket. It bounces hard off the wall, drops. “Two points,” he says absently. He goes back to work.

HE PACED THE BEDROOM. COUNTERCLOCKWISE. MARCIA put up with it, then removed her sleep mask, sighed. “Walk the other way, will you please? You’ll make us both dizzy.”

He stopped. Looked. “Aren’t you concerned? *I* am. I’m paying that school goddamn good money. I’m not crazy about everything they do, but if the child’s teacher calls me at work, it has to be about something.”

Marcia said very politely, “Are you assigning blame because I didn’t hover over the phone?”

“Why should anyone interfere with all your projects?” he asked. “Why should they do that?”

“Mel, let us not parry and thrust. I have a terrible day tomorrow.”

“All right.” He balanced firmly. “‘Horsebleep’ is not ‘See Jane run.’”

“Agreed.”

“Thank you.” He took a step, balanced again. “Marcia, that is all she said.”

“When?”

“Today.”

“Wait. What did she say *before* ‘horsebleep’?”

Irvin Faust is the author of Roar Lion Roar, a collection of stories, and of six novels, the most recent being Newsreel.

He looked down at her, shook his head. "Not a thing. Zero. She was quiet all day, until after recess. That's when she said it." He sat down suddenly. He was sweating.

"What triggered it?"

"How the hell do I know?"

"You didn't ask?"

He got up, began to pace again, stopped again, turned. "Jesus, I was too surprised . . ."

"Oh, for crying out loud." She rolled over in a neat ball, uncurled, thrust hard into the furry slippers.

"Where are you going?" he said.

"Next door."

"Wait. Don't get her up. Wait—"

The door was swinging even as he said it. He stared. The door swung again and Marcia stepped neatly back, Melanie draped on her shoulder. With easy strength she set her down in Mommy's Chair. Shook her gently. Melanie's eyes blinked wide.

"Honey," Marcia said, sitting on the bed, "did you use a sassafras word in school today?"

Melanie blinked. "I don't know."

"Reconstruct. Go back in your mind. Think about your day."

Melanie reconstructed. "I don't know."

"Honey, did you say 'horsebleep'?"

She reconstructed some more. "I think I said that."

Horowitz asked quietly, "What did Miss Garaminta do to make you say it?"

"Mel?" Marcia smiled up at him. "I don't think we should assign g-u-i-l-t."

He shrugged off the spelling lesson and said, "Please let me handle this . . . What did she do, Melanie?"

"I don't know, Daddy."

"She must have done or said *something*."

"Mel, too much p-r-e-s-s-u-r-e."

"What, Melanie?"

Melanie's chin trembled. Marcia folded into the lotus position on the bed. "What he means, Melanie, is this: Could you possibly figure out why you used a sassafras?"

". . . I don't know, Mommy."

Bleep, Horowitz thought.

"All right," Marcia said, "we are not driving you to the wall; everything is under control. We are not excited and neither are you. If you don't agree, just tell me."

"I feel all right, Mommy."

"Fine. Pat pat, hug hug. Now, let's all put it out of our heads and go to sleep. Let it all float away. Go inside with Daddy, Melanie."

"All right, Mommy."

Horowitz opened his mouth, but Marcia shook him off. She sank back, adjusted her sleep mask. He hesitated, then gathered up the wide-awake Melanie and walked back into the yellow and blue bedroom. He walked her up and down for five minutes, felt her grow heavy and quiet.

Then he eased her down under the electric blanket. He kissed her forehead, tucked her in, straightened up.

She opened her eyes, smiled up at him, and said, "Daddy, is Ed Kranepool over the hill?"

In the kitchen, after the peanut butter sandwich, he clasps both hands as if he is praying in *shul*. Then he lowers the hands in precise steps. Looks over his left shoulder, then back. Then wheels and whips toward first base. The runner is caught leaning; he's out by four feet . . .

"MR. HOROWITZ," MISS GARAMINTA SAID WITH quiet gravity, "I assure you that is what she said."

"Please repeat it," Horowitz said. "I have paper and pencil."

Her voice was very professional. "She said, quote, 'It's like kissing your sister,' unquote."

". . . Is that *all* she said?"

"Yes. That one phrase, all day. Mr. Horowitz, the context was somewhat bizarre."

"What . . . was . . . the . . . context?"

"Well," said the professionally concerned voice, "I had just asked her to pick up the visible boy in one hand and the visible girl in the other . . ."

"Yes?"

"And, well, she said it."

"She didn't say 'horsebleep'?"

"Oh, no, that was last Tuesday. She really hasn't communicated since then. Verbally. Until this. Mr. Horowitz, may I ask . . . would it have any . . . familial context?"

Speak English, he screamed silently at the wall. "I don't think so," he said calmly.

"There is a male sibling."

"She has a brother. Dan. He's a year and a half."

"That's a darling age. I hate to sound even remotely alarmist, Mr. Horowitz . . ."

What bleep. "Yes, go ahead?"

"I was just wondering if there might be a hint of confused sexuality . . . Mr. Horowitz?"

"No way."

"I was just wondering."

"NO WAY."

"I have to be candid with you about my perceptions."

He stopped twisting his ankle. "I appreciate that, Miss Garaminta, I really do. But it's laughable. She was flirting with her grandfather when she was eight days old. No way, Miss Garaminta."

"Well, as I said, I do have to live with my conscience . . ."

"Absolutely. I live with my conscience eight hours a day on *my* job. It isn't easy."

"Thank you, Mr. Horowitz."

"I'll be in touch, Miss Garaminta."

He swings from the heels. The ball screams in agony as it flies over the left-field wall. He walks out of the wash-room feeling stronger if not better.

THE NEXT DAY THEY HAD A THREE-WAY CONFERENCE: Horowitz, Marcia, Miss Garaminta. Horowitz listened, nodded, made good eye contact. Especially when Miss Garaminta said, "It's a bit hard to believe that she verbalizes a good deal at home."

"Believe me," Horowitz nodded, "she has a splendid vocabulary for her age. Sometimes we can't shut her up."

"Not that we're in the habit of trying," Marcia murmured.

"Well," Miss Garaminta said, "I simply have to tell you that she's very limited here. And then there's her choice of subject . . . horses . . ."

"Kids." Horowitz smiled, shrugged. "I was hung up on Hotpoint refrigerators. I thought that was crazy. Ice cubes. Hotpoint . . ."

"I don't see the analogy," Marcia said.

Miss Garaminta said quickly: "It's merely that the horse thing is rather odd in a developmental sense."

"Really?" Marcia said.

"How's that?" Horowitz said, leaning in a little.

"Well, it's generally girls who are pubeing who are into horses. This is unusually early."

"She walked very young," Marcia murmured.

"Great coordination," said Horowitz.

Miss Garaminta acknowledged with a shrug, then said, "I'm sure that's all true. I simply raise the possibility that it's more than one of those things . . ."

The room was pregnantly quiet.

Miss Garaminta finally said, "Perhaps she *should* see our Bunny man."

"I hate to be so negative," Horowitz said, "but suppose we give her a chance." He smiled. "Maybe next week it'll be the stock market."

Marcia said, "What's your point?"

"My point is, this week, it's horses, next week it could be AT&T."

"If I may," Miss Garaminta said. "That could be overly simplistic."

"I agree," Marcia said briskly. "Let's give your man a try."

"Just an informal chat, Mr. Horowitz."

Horowitz looked at her and she nodded encouragement. He looked at Marcia.

"Why don't we ask Melanie?" Marcia said.

He thought that over. Miss Garaminta watched him.

"All right. Fair enough. But *I'll* ask her."

"Go right ahead," said Marcia.

He got up and walked next door. Melanie was stroking the shmoo in the shiny Concorde jacket instead of punching him.

"Hi, poops."

"Hello, Daddy."

"Would you like to walk inside and answer a question?"

"Sure."

"Positive?"

"Uh huh."

"Okay, we walk."

He took her hand and they walked inside and he sat her down beside him. Everyone was quiet. Horowitz looked down at Melanie, who sat with her hands folded and her toes pointing in.

"Would you like to talk to a nice guy?" he said.

Melanie looked up at him.

"His name is Mr. Sitkin. He's the Bunny Development person."

Marcia said, "He could be very relaxing to talk to."

Miss Garaminta said, "He understands your age group."

Melanie continued to look at her father. He patted her shoulder and she nodded.

"Superstiff," she said with a shrug.

MILTON SITKIN HAD THREE FRAMED DIPLOMAS ON his wall and wore a beige turtleneck.

"It's a rather unusual situation, Mr. Horowitz," he said.

Horowitz kept tightly quiet.

"I've had three conferences with her, including intake."

Horowitz remained quiet.

"I'll come right out with it . . . Here it is . . . I think we're dealing with some form of glossolalia."

Horowitz finally said, "Come on."

"I've consulted the literature," Sitkin said, "to confirm my initial impression. I think that's what it is."

Horowitz tried a tiny smile. "You mean religious double-talk?" He tried a tiny wink. "We don't even talk religion with her." He smiled and winked. "We're orthodox atheists."

"I see," Sitkin said without changing his face. "Nevertheless, I feel we're dealing with some form of tongues." He bent over a spiral-bound notebook. "I quote: 'A dollar bill is the glue.'" He raised his head.

"Are you sure that she said 'a dollar bill'?" Horowitz said.

"In my notes I have the article."

". . . Could it have been plain 'dollar bill'?"

"It's possible. I use a bastardized Gregg. In any case, it's a pretty sophisticated statement for a five-year-old. Unless, as I suspect, we go back in time . . . Can we brainstorm this?"

"Sure."

"Was your family hit hard economically at some point? Say, the great Depression?"

"Well . . . my grandfather lost everything in 1930. But I never discussed *that* with Melanie."

"Then she knows nothing of that trauma?"

"How could she?"

"Of course. How could she?"

"Look, Mr. Sitkin, she's part of a group, right? Kids discuss money, right? With me it was dimes, with them it's dollar bills."

"Of course . . . Mr. Horowitz, how about this: 'You need the mow to get an oh.'"

"How do you spell 'mow'?"

"Why?"

"Well it could be . . . say, m.o."

"Or M-o-e. Is there a Moe in your family?"

"No."

"Moses?"

"NO."

"I see."

They waited. Then Sitkin said, "I'll tell you my professional position. Regardless of how fascinating the tongues thing may be, it rates nowhere in the taxonomy of cognitive functions."

"I'll tell you my position as a parent. I happen to think Melanie is a pretty bright kid."

"No argument." Sitkin smiled. "Mr. Horowitz, I'm just bending over backward to play it safe. I could get one helluva monograph out of this, but *she* is my top priority."

"That makes two of us."

"Then we're all together. Frankly, I think Dr. Bimway should have a talk with her."

"Who's he?"

"Our consulting psychologist."

"I thought *you* were."

"I'm the man in the trenches. We have to take it upstairs."

Horowitz examined the diplomas. Returned to Sitkin. "I want to put that on hold for now. I'd like to discuss it with my wife."

"Of course. I wouldn't wait too long, though."

"We won't."

"Fine. To loosen up our chemistry a little, can I tell you what she said when I said good-bye?"

"Sure, you can tell me."

Sitkin returned to the notebook, flipped a page.

"That child said: 'It is not over till it's over.'" He peeled off his glasses and sat back. "Mr. Horowitz, that is positively Kierkegaardian."

"IT IS NOT EST HORSEMANURE," MARCIA SAID WITH her hands on her hips.

"I did not say 'horsemanure,'" Horowitz corrected mildly.

"Don't think for one moment I don't know what 'horse-bleep' means," Marcia said.

"All right," he said. "I still don't want any est horse-bleep. Sitkin was enough." He met her eyes.

"It is not est. I have told you a hundred times. Here's a hundred and one. It is a transpersonal approach to counseling."

"Fine. Perfect. Only let's deal with her in a more constructive way."

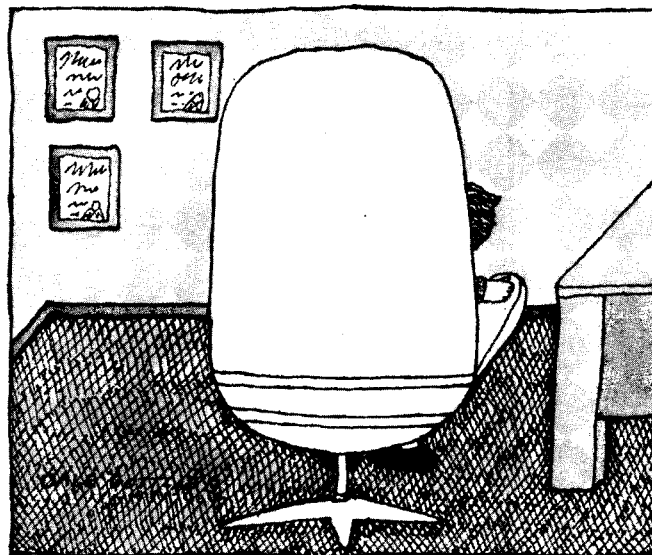
"And how will we do that? In front of the TV? This whole thing boils down to that, you know. Your cocka-mamie jockmanure, or bleep, or whatever you call it."

"I don't happen to buy that," he said calmly.

"No? Dollar Bill? Glue? Don't think I don't know. Your precious Bradley. Bill Precious Bradley."

"Senator Bradley."

"Don't get off the hook. Did his father's glue buy his Senate seat?"



"What the hell are you talking about?"

"'Dollar Bill is the glue.' You told her that."

"His father was a banker. He didn't even go to Princeton on a scholarship."

"Who gives a bleep?"

"Lots of people. As for glue, it so happens Bradley was the glue that held the Knicks together."

Marcia sat down hard. "Christ."

"Well, he was."

"Christ."

"Stop saying that."

She looked him over. "Maybe," she said, "you'd prefer 'You need the mo to get an O.'"

"I'd *much* prefer that. It happens to be a pretty damn good rule of life: You need the momentum to get an ovation."

"Will you please stop? You are giving me a headache."

"I'd say you were giving it to yourself."

"God. Give me strength. Or some of those aspirins your Nolan Ryan eats."

"It so happens that Nolan Ryan does not *eat* aspirins. He *throws* them. Aspirin *tablets*, to be precise."

"God."

"And kindly leave Nolan Ryan out of it. He has his own troubles; with all that magnificent smoke, he's barely above .500 lifetime."

She waited a good thirty seconds. "You should both eat it."

He waited, planned out the voice modulation, the spacing of the words. When he was completely ready, he said, "I thank you kindly. However, Melanie is still not going

to your guru. Her karma remains intact. So does her mantra. And do not lay any *est* guilt on me."

"*It is not est*. You are so simplistic and negative I wouldn't believe it if I didn't hear it. But I did."

"Oh, you did."

"Mel, I'm getting tired. I want only one thing. I want that child to re-acquire her energy awareness."

"Give her some sugar."

"Christ."

"Come on, Marcia," he said, trying a smile, "loosen up."

"I will loosen up," she said with total severity, "when the child gets the strength to surmount aspirin tablets, Dollar Bill, and the rest of your illicit world."

He leaped out of the lounge.

"Illicit? Illicit? I'll let you in on something, lady. My illicit world happens to be cathartic and therapeutic and maybe you just ought to try it."

"I'll take Ex-Lax, thank you," she said sweetly.

"So *I'm* simplistic and negative? Let us temporarily assume that, all right? But maybe, just *maybe*, this world you are rejecting out of hand is the one she prefers."

"She's five years old, *schmuck*."

"So?"

"Teach her to dance on the head of a pin."

"That's an answer?"

"Yes. Here's another. I'm taking her to Terry Meldencarver."

"I cannot accept that."

"You'd better, sonny boy, because I am."

"The hell you are."

"The hell I'm not."

She took Melanie to Terry Meldencarver.

MELDENCARVER LIVED IN AN APARTMENT WITH LOW ceilings and low furniture. He had on a beautiful toupee, which he could wear in the shower, and his nose was very short and thin.

"What do you think?" Marcia said as Melanie sat in the mandala room drawing.

"I've seen it before, of course," he said in his quiet voice. "It's her oneness."

Marcia closed her eyes. "He's shattered her inner space, hasn't he?" She opened her eyes. He let the question sink in. Then he barely nodded.

"I'd have to agree," he said gently.

Marcia rocked a few times, caught herself, and said, just as gently, "I've had it, Terry."

"Easy, Marcia."

"All right, but I have. This is too much. I'm sorry, but it is."

He didn't say anything.

"What about her core, Terry?"

"I can't quite reach it."



VERTEBRAE

Here I lie
in bed with you with a bad
back, pain and desire
driving me mad.

Surely,
were I to move
as passion bids
I might curse love.

Yet I dare not turn
darkness solemn
by seeming to favor
my spinal column.

It were better
to sleep alone
than admit to lacking
backbone.

Then shall I
certify my trust
in the therapy
of lust?

Now I consult
my slipped disc.
We accept
the risk.

—Robley Wilson, Jr.

Marcia focused on her quiet hands, then looked up, asked very firmly, "Can you do anything?"

"I'll certainly have to dissolve blame."

"Yes . . . Terry, do what . . . you have to do."

"Of course."

She examined her hands again, shook her head. "Have you noticed her body language?" she said.

"That's my business, dear."

"Oh, I'm sorry . . ."

"That's perfectly all right. Yes. She's very skewed."

"God. I know. Oh, I know. Terry . . . can you . . . restore her center?"

"I'll certainly give it my best shot."

Her hands jumped. "God, don't say that."

"Why not?"

"That's the way *she* talks now."

He reached over, touched her stiff fingers.

"Mustn't indulge in panic, Marcia."

"I know . . ."

"What else do you know?" he said, lifting her chin. She smiled and avoided the toupee and the nose.

"The universe always says yes," she answered with total repose.

Melvin:

We have a basic problem and we both know it, but I will spell it out because at times like this you lapse into your pseudo-stupidity. Here it is: I cannot and will not permit Melanie to be further trapped by your idiocy. Or to be paralyzed by it. Therefore she (and I) are going to work with Terry Meldencarver, and wipe that infuriating grin off your face. While we do, we will stay with my sister Adele. This includes Daniel. I am asking, *telling* you, not to interfere. Not now. She must get the chance, ultimately, to choose. For now, therefore, the child must give up your world or she is *forever* consigned to wondering if Red Holman can win with five *schvartzas*. This I cannot permit.

Sincerely,
Marcia Singer-Horowitz

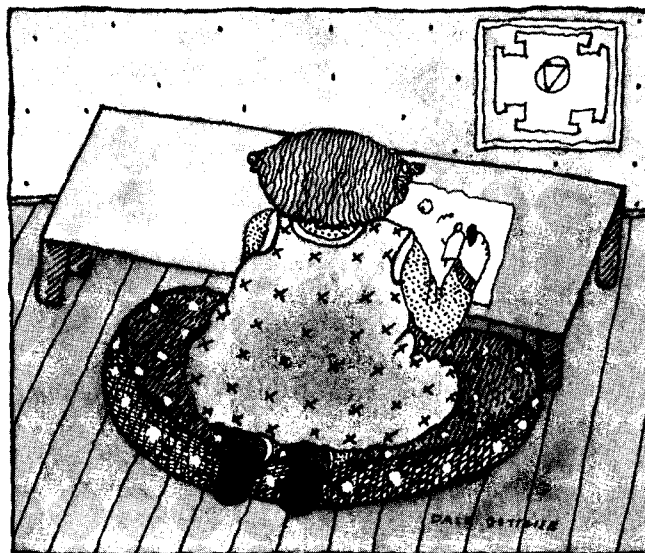
He circles Holman and above it writes "SIC(K)." Then he takes his evening walk. At the corner he jabs the lamppost with three violent lefts, smashes it with an overhand right. Refuses to yell.

HE CAME HOME AND ATE A TV DINNER. THEN, WHILE soaking his right hand in hot water and Epsom salts, he turned, with the left, to a cable sports channel and watched the Wolfpack battle the Blue Devils in a dual swim meet. Then he switched to channel 10 for the Rangers and the Islanders, agreeing absolutely with all the Big Whistle had to say. During the breaks in the action, he flipped to channel 9 for the Knicks and the Nets, his head shaking at the condition of the Human

Eraser's knees. During time-outs he clicked to WNYC for the CUNY tournament, where he yearned quietly for the Beavers, Nat, the NIT, the NCAA.

He maintained this routine for seven nights, coming home from work a bit earlier each afternoon so he could plunge into the action of the Boilermakers, the Wolverines, the Redmen, the Spurs, the Whalers, and the Flames, the Iceman and Magic. He also managed to pick up from the South the first optimistic stirrings of Tom Terrific and Louisiana Lightning.

On the eighth day he got up late, toughened his right hand with witch hazel, then called in sick. He ate a TV lunch, watched the Celtics and the Bullets on the Beta-max, locked up, and drove across town to the Green Forest Lower School. He parked in a six-dollar garage and walked down the street to the school. He told the security



guard and the lady at the desk it was a medical emergency.

"I hate to barge into your day like this, Miss Garaminta, but something's come up and I have to relieve you of your top problem child."

"You've come for Melanie," Miss Garaminta said.

"Oh, yes."

"Mr. Horowitz . . . I . . . well . . ."

"Is there a problem concerning my problem?" he said lightly.

"I'm afraid there is . . ."

"Well, we *all* have problems." He waited. Then: "I *am* her father, Miss Garaminta."

She touched her cheek, her hair, her cheek again; she'd make a good third-base coach, he thought, smiling with support.

"Oh, how I hate these family things," she said with a thin voice.

He felt a buzz, but said, "It comes with the territory. *What* family things, Miss Garaminta?"

She stopped with the hand signals.

He said, "You can be very candid with me."

"I know that . . . All right . . . Mrs. Horowitz gave me firm instructions not to allow anyone to pick up Melanie except Mrs. Horowitz."

"May I point out that marriage is a fifty-fifty proposition, Miss Garaminta?"

"Oh, I knew this would happen. I knew it. And I'd be caught in the middle. I told that to Dr. Meldencarver."

"Doctor?"

"Meldencarver. Melanie's therapist."

". . . Pepper-and-salt toupee? Bad nose job?"

"His hair *did* look too nice. The nose . . . was awfully thin . . ."

"Uh huh. *Doctor?*"

"That's what she called him . . ."

His hand ran through his hair. "Miss Garaminta, listen to me. A man who will change his looks will change his credentials. He's a doctor like I'm the Sultan of Swat."

"He . . . doesn't have his doctorate?" she said stiffly.

"Miss Garaminta, I don't even think he has a B.A. I'm not absolutely sure, but I know this: he is a *mister* and his major was hotel management."

She leaned against the receptionist's desk. He said quickly, "You've been candid; now I'll be candid."

". . . Yes?"

"My wife and I are having problems. Serious ones."

". . . I inferred that from . . . He studied hotel management?"

"And motel. Miss Garaminta, as a result of these problems, my wife has moved out and taken Melanie . . . Mister Meldencarver is squarely in the picture."

She stepped away from the desk.

"You *do* understand what I'm saying?" he said.

"I understand," she said quietly.

"I'm fighting a stacked deck, Miss Garaminta . . . She's probably told you things about me. She and the hotel man."

". . . *She* did. He just listened."

"What did she tell you?"

"That . . . you hit imaginary baseballs."

"What about voices?" he said evenly.

"No, oh, no, she never mentioned voices."

He leaned in. "Did your Mr. Sitkin tell you I was a nut?"

"Of course not."

"What do *you* think?"

"Why, it never occurred to me . . . A concerned parent . . ."

"Okay. Miss Garaminta, the woman who told you those things, who has really leveled some serious charges, is shacking up with a phony doctor. With phony hair and a phony nose."

Her eye contact faltered. The receptionist hunched over her *Time*; the security guard studied his keys.

Horowitz said carefully, "Melanie is smack in the middle. Between those two and her father."

". . . That man called himself 'Doctor' . . ." Her eyes tightened. She firmed up her thin chest.

"I have always been so ridiculously naive," she said. "Mr. Horowitz, I'll get Melanie for you."

THEY PURRED SOUTH ON THE JERSEY TURNPIKE. HOROWITZ, Melanie, the warm, cozy car. The dashboard lights glowing and out of the lights the rise and fall of a local high school basketball game. They listened without saying anything until they crossed into Pennsylvania and the game faded.

"You can turn it off if you want to," Horowitz said. She promptly turned it off.

"Where are we going, Daddy?" she said.

He nodded at his headlights picking out the road.

"Greensboro. North Carolina."

"Why, Daddy?"

"The ACC tournament."

She was quiet, then settled back.

"Big hoops, Daddy?"

"The biggest." He glanced down, then quickly back. "You haven't seen pressure till you see this tournament."

"More than Super Sunday?"

"As *much*."

She looked up through the windshield.

"Will the Wolfpack be there?"

"Of course."

"Daddy?"

"Yes?"

"Who was the leader of the Wolfpack?"

"David Thompson, naturally."

She smiled at him and they glided through the quiet glow of a small town. When they were clear of it, she said, "Daddy?"

"Yes, hon?"

"If you have David Thompson on your side, what do you have to do?"

"Alley oop."

She wiggled against her seat belt.

"Daddy?"

"Yes, doll."

"Why do the Tigers drive you crazy?"

"The slowdown, doll."

"How do you beat a slowdown, Daddy?"

"With a swarming D, of course."

She nodded, scrunched back, stared through the windshield. They were quiet in the sweeping circle around Philadelphia. When they were moving through the lights again, into Delaware, she looked up at him.

"Daddy?"

"I'm right here."

"Daddy, how do you beat a zone?"

"Outside shooting, poops."

"The ultimate weapon, Daddy?"

"Skyhook."

"What do you do with four corners, Daddy?"

"Hold a lead."

"Says who, Daddy?"

"Says the Tarheels."

". . . Daddy?"

"I hear you."

"Who needs desire?"

"Anybody who wants to win, luv."

She was silent, looked gravely up through the windshield.

"Seat belt all right?" he said.

"Uh huh."

As Washington loomed, she said, "Daddy?"

"Pit stop?"

"Not yet. . . Daddy, where did Al McGuire have Cousy?"

"Heck, in his hip pocket."

She bounced once, settled back. She was very still, but outside of Richmond she stirred.

"Daddy? Run to daylight?"

He glanced down very briefly.

"Lombardi," he said.

"Purple People Eaters, Daddy?"

"The Vikings."

"Shotgun, Daddy?"

"Roger the Dodger."

"Rockne, Daddy?"

"Go, go, go, go, go."

"What else, Daddy?"

"Fight, fight, fight, fight, fight."

". . . Daddy?"

"Yes, babe?"

"What do you have to tell Mommy, no matter what?"

He looked down at her and smiled, then returned to the road. "Eat the darn ball."

"What else, Daddy?"

"Swallow the apple."

"What *else*, Daddy?"

He nodded, tightened his mouth. "It isn't over till it's over."

She sighed.

They crossed into North Carolina and she looked up at him. "Daddy?"

"What, cookie?"

She wriggled against her seat belt.

"Daddy, if Mommy yells and screams, what do you have to do?"

He hitched up his shoulders.

"Daddy, what?"

He rolled his neck.

"Daddy?"

He pushed down on the accelerator, just a whisper.

"What, Daddy?"

". . . Give her a T," he said grimly.

"Daddy?"

"Tell her to take five."

"Daddy?"

"Sit her down for . . . a quarter."

"Daddy!"

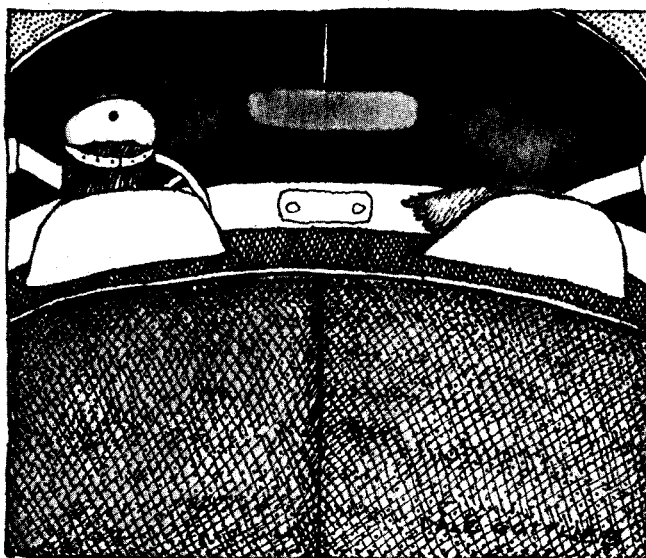
He looked down. She smiled up and nodded. "What, Daddy?"

"KICK . . . BUTT," he said.

She sighed and said, "I'm going to take a nap now, Daddy."

She pulled the blanket up to her shoulders and leaned against him. Soon her head dropped against his arm.

He hunkers down over the wheel. He pulls out of the flow, weaves ahead, spots a Ford. He slides in behind it and picks up the slipstream. He feels the gentle pull, knows he is in splendid position. He checks the dashboard. Everything is ready. With concentration, intensity, momentum, and perfect rhythm, they race toward the checkered flag of dawn. □



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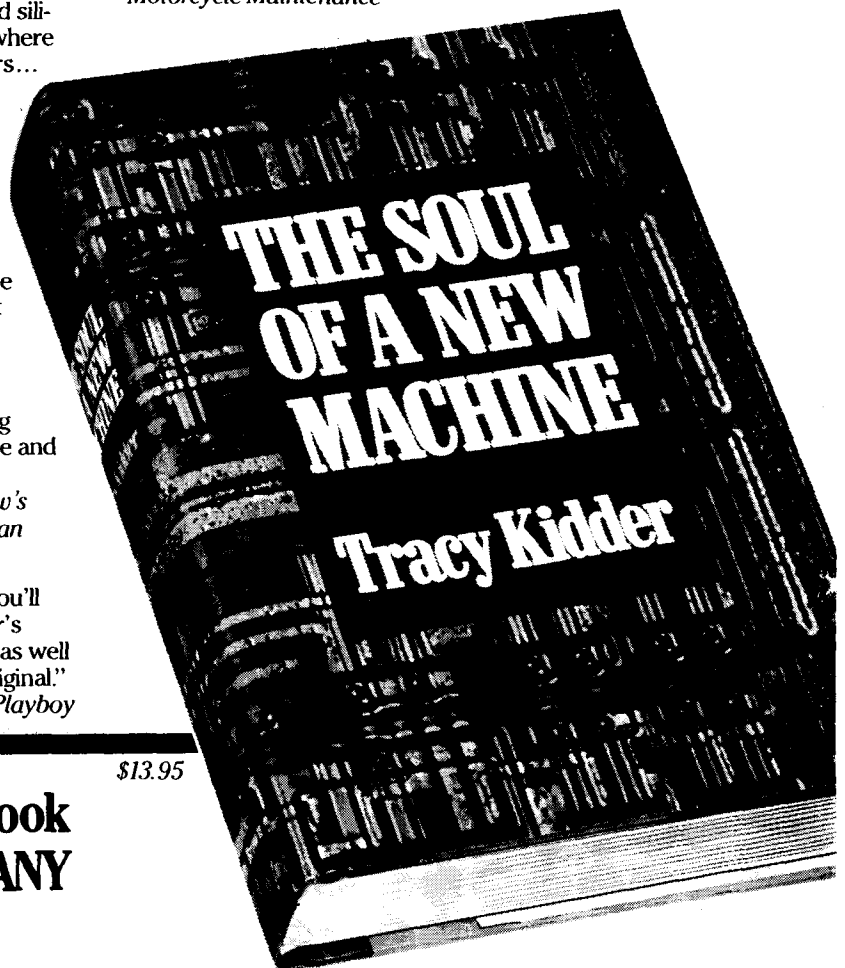
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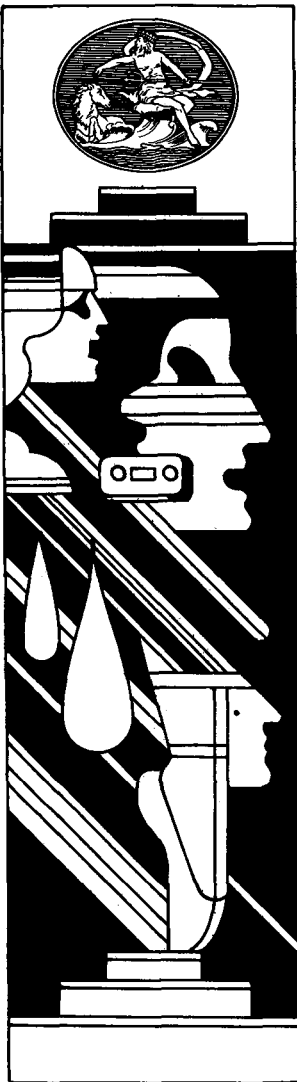
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A NEW APPROACH TO THE NEW JOURNALISM: A NEW APPROACH

BY ROBERT M. STROZIER



ILLUSTRATIONS BY DOUG JOHNSON

I AM ARGUING FOR a new kind of journalism. Past writing has been too constricted by limitations. What are needed are very long articles and books, written fast, which include everything that happened, not gardened.

People understand The New Journalism to mean a certain kind of writing, but I don't use it that way. I broaden it to include all non-fiction, referred to here as writing. There are six categories to consider. Writing should be: 1) fairly instant, 2) long, 3) easy, 4) staffed, 5) hazy, and 6) kind of inaccurate.

We will begin with number two.

As we step back, we see that writing should be longer. A case in point would be an article, which has less to it than a three-part series. Then you would have a book offering even more, and finally long books having the most of all. That's why they sell better.

Let us first consider those books of mine which are historical in nature, since they are especially lengthy. Not enough attention has been paid to the speaking that average people do, and some of it concerns history that has been handed down to them. If you listen for it, there is talking most of the time, and the pages of a history fill up in minutes, with it in them. I used to edit material, but then I saw that something was being lost, so now I go with verbatim transcripts of all that is uttered. There is a richness there that cannot be equaled by paring some of it down.

Related to this is what people do. We will treat it as related to what they say. I can't do everything myself, so a staff of young people accompanies me on the trips to each place every day. While I am tape recording anything, they write down what there is to see, which I then blend into the bulk. (I have gotten ahead of myself. This is to be found in number four.)

So you might have a person entering

the book and speaking at length, without being interrupted. Then at the end there would be descriptions of voice and manner and surroundings, anything that struck our notice, followed by highlights of some parts. A hundred years later the reader can go through it and say, Aha.

In some instances I think we should rewrite numerous histories that have already been done, but the task at hand is to render the ins and outs of each day as it transpires, set against a context of how the past compared with it. I urge those I record to go back in time, but you know how people are, their concerns are often with the here and now. That is fine though, and, in the strictest sense, this is history as she is being made.

Don't spoon out the past to me, in difficult dribs and drabs.

We turn now to an historical note. The earliest known long histories known of were written by primitive monks who roamed the fields observing occurrences. Later, Eusebius spoke of the "gold" that is to be found in long chapters that are written fast. Then the bottom fell out, and histories started getting hard and shorter. For centuries, they were confused, scrawny birds who didn't have any clothes on. Now they are getting more spread out between hard covers, but they still have a long way to go.

Pages are a receptacle, into which to pour all the chips of what people may say and do. To do less would be not to include everything, and then what would you have but a half-empty husk?

But how can anyone possibly do what you're suggesting? you ask. The answer is not easy, but it lies in the number of books that should be written and pub-

Robert M. Strozier's observations have frequently appeared in The Atlantic.

December report on

ATLANTIC MONTHLY PRESS BOOKS

The creator of Walter Mitty and the Thurber Dog, of the Seal in the Bedroom and the Unicorn in the Garden, James Thurber counted among his friends many of the most distinguished literary and theatrical figures of his time. He wrote hugely entertaining letters to and about them. More than one hundred of these letters, none published before, are collected in the **SELECTED LETTERS OF JAMES THURBER**, edited by Helen Thurber and Edward Weeks. The letters were written between 1935 and 1961. They are, comments *Publishers Weekly*, "a precious memento of a great man and richly rewarding, with viewpoints that sometimes make one cry, sometimes think, but mostly laugh." *Illustrated with thirty-five Thurber drawings of men, women, and dogs.*



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LITTLE, BROWN

lished. I myself have set a goal and it is to produce a set of fifty volumes, covering a certain time and place. Another set concerns some other subjects, which I will get to next, and so on down the line.

When not quoting, you should always use long words, of course, and be unsparing of language, especially with regard to adjectives. They are your stock-in-trade, and they set you apart from the savage cavemen of Australia.

A word about technique. My tape recorder is on almost all the time. Even when I'm home I set it on the window-sill, in the hopes it may pick up a shouted phrase or a snatch of a comment. Things I may say about the past also go into the books. And Mitch and Cindi of my staff, who live with me, are constantly on the prowl for what could lie under each beckoning rock.

2) Next, we will discuss category number one. Contrary to what some critics contend, a book should be written to meet a demand for it, and a really fine job can be done instantaneously. Sometimes I may write the biography of a famous person, for instance. Through interviews with some and clippings, it can be done in a week. Or there could be a book written about a major event that has just finished finishing. An example would be the one I recently wrote about the falling-down-of-the-redwoods scare, which is just now coming to the surface.

Because things are always fast-breaking, there should always be fast writing. Too long has journalism slumbered in the shade of an overblown mummy that is as outmoded as yesterday's cigarette. Sure, you can check out every fact and then fly to Tichnor, Arkansas, to interview somebody's grandmother, who just died, and I can't wait to read your book, but wait a minute, why is it two years too late and about an inch thick? By now it is as dead as a stale doornail.

3) We come now to, Writing should be easy. By this I mean that there should be very little effort, in the sense of it seeming to be exerted. A thing that's written should stand on its own. It should not suggest that someone is behind it. I am a proud man, but I don't want to stick out.

The writer must submerge himself, until he seems to drown. He must be the last to arrive at the study and the first to leave. Here, I distinguish between

writing down, which is the direction we should go, and regular writing, which is shown to be a clumsy attempt to wrestle material to the ground.

To lighten it, the load should sometimes be placed on the broad shoulders of fiction, especially if you can't be at an event you are covering. This could be because your staff is off or because of fatigue. No one should do legwork if he feels wrung out like a piece of wilted lettuce. Let's say you are reporting on a big fire. Working from some reports and hazarding a guess, in bold, unregimented strokes, as to what might have happened, you can have there be licking flames and all the rest in your account. You may actually come closer to it than those who were there, because you can see the forest for the trees. (*I don't do articles anymore. Why do one, when a book will do?*)

Sometimes you should also go into people's heads and peer out, because this gives you more possibilities of what was being thought of to play with.

Being there for attribution when you need him could also be the undisclosed source. One of my recent best sellers derived from interviews with a man some detractors have called Big Liar, but I suppose they would have liked it better if everything could be verified. But *practically nothing can!* What a courteous, unbuttoned mouth in an away place may happen to say must simply be taken on faith.

Number four has been covered. *Some huge novels are staff-written. I am arguing for that too.*

5) This brings us to, Writing should be hazy, which shares some of It should be kind of inaccurate, so we will consider the two together, dwelling on the three parts of it.

You can't have enough sex in books, by the way.

A) Writing is a 50/50 proposition. The richly larded interaction between the face of what happened and my face is the key matter, with it varying all the time, so who could differ with me, when it comes to what I saw, or didn't? Accuracy, as it has been used, doesn't even exist, seen this way.

B) The biggest mistake you could make would be to challenge those small errors that inevitably find their way into the occasional paragraph. The question should be asked: Aren't your instincts so sound that you probably wanted them to creep in on all fours,

like fine lobsters? Seen in this light, they probably turn out not to be errors at all, but bait, or of such insignificance that they quickly disappear into the swollen sea of your narrative like nondescript peas. As for any big wrong fact, it could, like the bad apple in a cinder pile, prove how good the other apples are.

It would, in any case, go unnoticed in the whirr of the reportage. If the Silver Streak railroad train whizzed by, would you remember the blaze of azure or the forgotten particulars of a wheel that may not be firmly situated on the rail?

Also, truly good writing requires that it be puzzled over. Slightly muddy, it should spring out, and engage the reader's perplexity.

Mitch, can I have a light?

C) The hardest task is to write about a specific person, who hasn't been in the news, and this is when you should do a composite sometimes. If I say that someone has flared Victor Mature lips, then I am already delimiting your perception of him in terms of a tiny part of another personage. Or if I say he has tiny slit-like snake eyes, then I am really going the distance and bringing animal sections in. By the time you get through, a person could be a real mish-mash.

But with so many writers today, we have a pathetic lameness, in that they don't go far enough with having people be mixtures of others. In the hands of someone who knows how to do it, it can be done though. As an example, I just finished a portrait of a clerk for a book I'm doing on something. Despite repeated efforts, we couldn't seem to locate the person, and so it became necessary to have him feigned. My staff, which is divided into parts of people, upper/lower, inner/outer, etc., assembled characteristics of clerks we have encountered along the way. Quotes, that had the ring of what he might have said, were put into his mouth. A certain tilt of the head was added. Type pants, that would probably have been worn by him, were pulled up onto his trunk. And so on, until eventually came he to be, bearing now the unmistakable stamp of his own special himness, more of it even than might have been found in the individual himself. You'd be sure to recognize him if you met it on the street.

Reliance on too much accuracy is sounding the death knell of writing as we know it.

Insert earlier: Or, should you be forced to leave the scene of the crime for an appointment, the notes of another writer, perhaps hastily observed, can sometimes yield all that you may need. These so-called diligent phonies wouldn't know a story if they saw it, and their writing is as thin and lifeless as a vine. So you should sift through and lift from some pads.

I also ghostwrite no-hope-of-recovery books.

In conclusion, I have said that regular writing should be done away with by 1994 and replaced by what I call nowriting. This would be not writing anything down, but simply experiencing it when it happens, through others on cassettes or through the compiler on different shows. For instance, even this paper I wrote would have been better if it hadn't been written.

To be continued. □

BALLET A CLASSIC "BEAUTY"

BY HOLLY BRUBACH



TCHAIKOVSKY'S SCORE FOR *The Sleeping Beauty* is like a miracle waiting to happen, and occasionally—not nearly often enough—the miracle is brought into being on the stage. Always dance-worthy, the music describes the characters and the course of events, in detail. When the staging keeps to this musical blueprint, as it does in the best productions of *Beauty*, this nineteenth-century storybook ballet manages to capture more of human nature than the most modern psychological dance-dramas.

The most recent *Sleeping Beauty* I've witnessed was brought by England's Royal Ballet to the U.S. this past summer. Though a few other companies, here and elsewhere, maintain their own productions, the Royal's undisputed claim to this ballet makes perfect sense: it rests partly with Margot Fonteyn, who remains the definitive Princess Aurora in many people's memories, and partly with the English national character, which takes hierarchy for granted (American ballet companies

Holly Brubach has written about dance for Vogue, Ballet News, and Ballet Review.

identify in the program every last dancer in a performance; the Royal lists only those dancers in featured roles and accounts for all the rest collectively, as "Artists of the Royal Ballet"). Anyone who ever doubted the plausibility of this ballet's fuss over a princess had only to consult his television screen in July to see the pomp and circumstance surrounding Aurora's wedding confirmed in real life, in the marriage of Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer.

The Sleeping Beauty culminates in a wedding, but its subject isn't love, or even marriage—this is a ballet about manners, about moral issues of the most everyday sort. The plot is a tug-of-war, declared in the music, between good and evil. From the first four bars of the Introduction, we learn that an entire kingdom is in peril: the fairy Carabosse's motif hovers around E minor, with a witchlike cackle built on an augmented-sixth chord. Tchaikovsky's marking is *fff* at the outset; only two measures later, a lightning-fast arpeggio that builds to a thunderclap demands a crescendo. There is something stingy and abrupt about Carabosse's rhythms: an eighth note, an eighth rest, an eighth note, an eighth rest, and then—a little fit of pique—four sixteenth notes. When Carabosse laughs, the harmony alternates between two dissonant chords; otherwise, it tends to move stealthily, chromatically. Nowhere in this twenty-seven-bar-long introductory passage is there a musical line continuous enough to constitute a melody. Carabosse extends her hand and snatches it right back again, in music that is furious and menacing. The curtain stays down. With nothing to look at onstage, nowhere to run for cover, the audience is caught in the storm. Then, suddenly, the weather changes.

The key changes, from E minor to E major, and we hear the Lilac Fairy waft in on a harp glissando, hushed pianissimo. She sets our fears to rest, with a calm and expansive melody, four breathless measures long. The tempo is andantino (compared with Carabosse's allegro vivo), the rhythm is even and soothing. When, finally, the Lilac Fairy raises her voice to triple forte, it's to announce glorious news: the brass adopts her theme and brings it to full flower.

Throughout the ballet, Carabosse and

the Lilac Fairy are pitted harmonically against each other, and their antagonism in the music is truly ingenious. A major key and its relative minor, which is lower by a third (the relative minor of E major is C#), are coexistent—they share the same scale. A major key and its parallel minor, however, do battle over the same territory: in both E major and E minor, the tonic is E, but the minor scale must lower the third tone by half a step. Parallel keys disagree; one or the other must win. So the Lilac Fairy and Carabosse come to blows in the key of E, major versus minor.

The Lilac Fairy's decree in the Introduction gives way to eleven bars of a march, off in the distance, and with that the music comes down to earth. The curtain rises on the ballet's prologue; we hear the procession coming closer. The next music, titled No. 1, March, in the score, echoes the tag end of the Introduction. Like most marches, this one sounds important, but, with its dotted eighth notes on the offbeats, it's too graceful and lilting to be mistaken for a military drill. This music heralds the arrival of noblemen, who walk tall, and women wearing wide skirts, stepping lightly. They are making their way to the palace, part of which we see onstage, for the christening of the newborn Princess Aurora. The time is the seventeenth century. Though we never learn the location of this king's realm, his palace and the fashions of his court look remarkably like those of Louis XIV, the king of France who founded the first official academy for ballet.

Presiding over the festivities onstage is Cattalabutte, the emcee, a self-important civil servant who wears his authority like a well-polished badge. The Royal Ballet's Leslie Edwards plays Cattalabutte in the tradition of Eric Blore's hotel managers and waiters in Astaire-Rogers movies—servile, slightly rotund, swaggering, fussy, easily befuddled. The ladies and gentlemen, who enter by twos, ask Cattalabutte's permission to go look at the baby in her cradle, upstage. Permission granted. Cattalabutte stalks the stage as if he owns it, until a footman hurries on to announce the King's arrival.

The King and Queen wear velvet cloaks lined in ermine; two attendants follow along behind and carry their trains. The Royal's finery (costumes for this production by David Walker) strikes a believable balance between

antique and lived-in: these cloaks, for example, don't look as if they've spent the past few centuries hanging in a museum, nor do they look like costumes—brand-new. The king asks Cattalabutte if he's sure the guest list is complete. Cattalabutte shakes his head, as if to say, "You can place your faith in me." Not to worry.

In this ballet, mime becomes dancing; every gesture is positioned precisely on the music. Long speeches are designated in the score ("*Récit de Cattalabutte*" is specified twice in this march alone). Classical-ballet mime is, of course, stated according to French grammar: "I love you" becomes "I you love," or "*je t'aime*." But the music underlying the words in this ballet makes them more lyrical and eloquent than any spoken language.

On the final chord of the march, everyone onstage pays his respects to the King and Queen in *révérence*. Then the guests of honor arrive (No. 2, *Scène Dansante*). In this kingdom, apparently, no one questions the existence of fairies; they're invited as a matter of course for state occasions like this one. They live in peaceful harmony with the people, though their powers are clearly superhuman. Five fairies appear, each with a cavalier and a footman bearing her gift to the baby Princess. Then come eight girls—junior fairies, presumably—who pave the way for the Lilac Fairy. In some productions, she is simply the last of the fairies to arrive. But the Royal Ballet, which makes no apologies for differences in rank, sets the Lilac Fairy apart from the rest. So, when Carabosse arrives to deliver her curse, it is logically only the Lilac Fairy who can countermand it.

To a waltz marked *grazioso*, the eight girls in the Lilac Fairy's retinue dance in canon—two lines of four, with one line taking up the steps of the other. The music, with a big crescendo to fortissimo and the addition of the brass, shoos the girls off and brings on the fairies' six cavaliers, who execute a fairly standard jumping combination, impressive in unison, then *pirouette* and exit in time for the reprise of the first theme and the girls' return. The six fairies finish out the waltz in front of the Lilac Fairy's corps.

The King and Queen descend from their thrones; the Queen invites the fairies to dance. The Lilac Fairy accepts for them all: Thank you.

The six fairies convene—*bourrées* in a circle—then sit on their cavaliers' knees, in a line at the foot of the stage, for the harp glissandi that open the Adagio (No. 3, *Pas de Six*). The fairies' six footmen—little boys—return with the gifts, each presented on a tasseled velvet cushion. Then, one by one, from left to right, the fairies turn two *pirouettes* and finish balanced in *attitude*, supported by their cavaliers.

All together, the fairies do *développé à la seconde*, and at the height of the extension their partners lift them, so that they seem to soar. They land in *arabesque*, and each of them dips one hand to the ground, as if rippling the surface of a pool, or consecrating the center of the stage. But the musical climax of this scene goes to the baby, brought down by her nurse from the crib to that hallowed spot where the fairies converged. The music swells from *ff* to *fff* to *ffff*, as the fairies gather round and the Lilac Fairy is lifted high overhead; then—more glissandi—they give their blessings with sensuous, rippling arm motions, working their magic. The tempo picks up, the adagio theme heard a few moments earlier returns, *allegro vivo*, and along with it come the eight girls. The stage is now set for the fairies to bestow their gifts individually, each with her own variation.

Our modern-day notion of fairies and who they might be is a rather insipid one, but, fortunately, Tchaikovsky and Marius Petipa, who choreographed the first *Beauty* in 1890 (based on the fairy tale by Charles Perrault), had a broader range of personalities in mind. No two of these six variations are alike.

The first occurs in Bb major, the same key as the preceding adagio, with a sweet, sustained oboe melody over a clarinet walking up and down stairs. This is, in the Royal's version, the Fairy of the Crystal Fountain, and her dancing is gentle, with precious footwork—*bourrées*, *piqués*, soft *pliés* on point—and frequent changes of facing. Slowly, languorously, she extends one arm, then the other, like a woman admiring her long evening gloves. Midway through, a bassoon takes over the theme from the oboe. Harmonically, this variation makes quick little forays into G minor (the relative minor of Bb major), and so prefigures the second fairy, of the Enchanted Garden, whose variation is set in G minor. Her music

and her dance—mischievous *piqués* back and *bourrées* forward, little runs and quick double *ronds de jambe* on point, all set to fidgety, staccato woodwinds over galloping strings—set her apart from the first fairy. But, as if by some reciprocal arrangement, she too declares their kinship harmonically, by reverting to B $\flat$ major for the middle eight bars. Though none of the remaining four variations in this suite makes reference to any other, the major/minor link between the first two fairies, with each briefly in the other's key, hints at some larger scheme: we understand by ear, right off, that these are not star turns for competing ballerinas but are six compatible solo variations in which each of the godmothers bestows her own charms on the baby Princess.

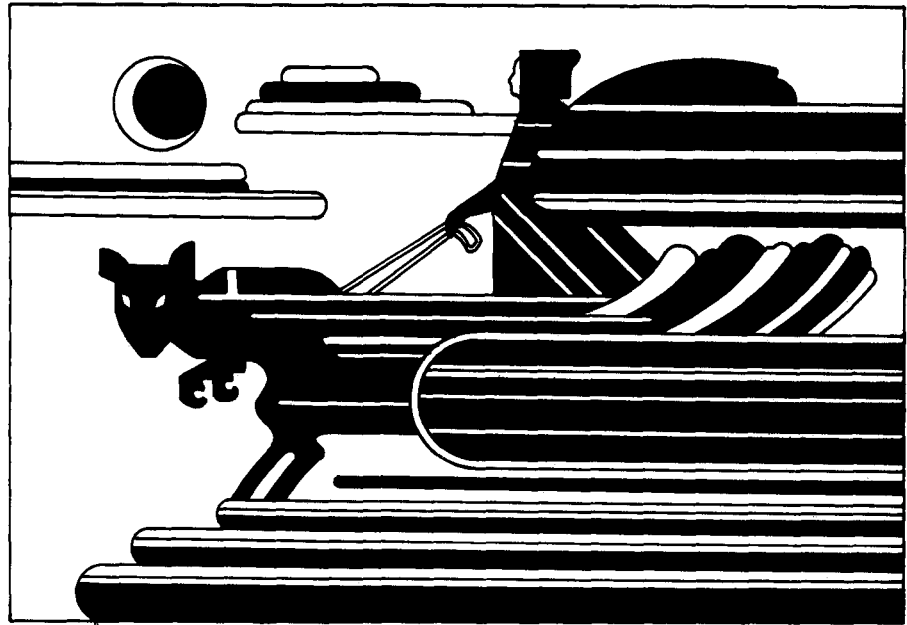
The third fairy is calm, enchanting. Her tiny walking steps, *emboîtés*, and hops in *attitude*—all on point—underscore the music's upper line, pizzicato strings that sprinkle a little trail of eighth notes. Then the dancing shifts our focus from the strings to the shorter, more melodic figure that began on the trombone and was taken over by the piccolo, an octave higher: the little hops and dainty pointwork give way to a larger, more sustained step—a slow *développé* from front to back, through *passé* into *arabesque*.

The fourth variation, set, like the one before, in D major, belongs to the Fairy of the Songbirds; a piccolo descant tweets along with the melody on the glockenspiel. This fairy scurries on point, with her hands fluttering. The music and the choreography together characterize her as vivacious. She raises the pitch of energy onstage, and it's in that new, higher register that the fifth fairy, of the Golden Vine, enters, shooting sparks. Hers is the famous "finger" variation, in which she points with both hands at once to one corner, then to another, up, down—her gestures seem designed to cast a kind spell on the Princess and, at the same time, to bewitch the audiences, onstage and in the theater. Twice she leaps out of a string of fast *châiné* turns, right on the top note of an octave-long chromatic scale, then runs back, as if to retract the outburst.

The last to take her turn is the Lilac Fairy, whose variation is the only waltz of the six, and everything about it is expansive—large and clear. The chore-

ography also draws a subtle distinction between her and the rest of the fairies, not with steps we haven't yet seen but with many familiar steps on a grander scale than we've seen them so far. Like two of the others' variations, the Lilac Fairy's includes double *ronds de jambe*, but whereas theirs were low and quick, hers are leisurely, with a last-minute lift into a high *développé à la seconde*. The music builds until the melody's final round, fortissimo, when the Lilac Fairy swings into *fouettés* in *arabesque*—her leg swooping down and up again into a well-held second position, her torso twisting into *arabesque*. The cavaliers return—to the strong,

the wings and will be onstage any minute. The King and Queen hastily review with consternation the scroll that is the guest list—Carabosse, also a fairy, has been forgotten. The menacing theme that began the Introduction, we now know, was an omen of this: hurling thunderbolts in E minor, Carabosse rides right into the midst of the festivities in a carriage driven by her pack of rats. Two rats run on ahead, paving the way, and point back to her: Here she comes! She descends from her coach and, about to explode but restraining her anger for the moment, walks forward and curtsies to the King and Queen. Then she unleashes her fury:



square music of the coda—with air turns, *cabrioles*, *assemblés battus*; the girls in the Lilac Fairy's retinue come back, then the fairies, two at a time, crossing the stage. The Lilac Fairy herself brings this finale to a close, wending her way downstage with a few steps, then an *arabesque*, as the orchestra peals the same note, bell-like. As soon as she arrives at the footlights, the fairies and their company all take their places in the tableau that concluded the preceding *Scène Dansante*.

THE KING AND Queen come forward to thank the fairies; the fairies' footmen surround them and offer the gifts. Suddenly, the sky darkens. "*Bruit dans le vestibule*," the score says—a commotion just offstage. A page hurries on: Sire . . . But the warning comes too late. Carabosse has already arrived in

You didn't invite me—why? The King fumbles for an excuse: I—I, uh . . . it wasn't me, it was (pointing to Cattalabutte) him! This King, passing the buck, is only human. Cattalabutte cowers in fear. As the rats dance a little agitated jig, Carabosse slowly walks a circle around him, sizing up her prey. In some productions, she snatches his wig, as the score directs. But in the Royal Ballet, Carabosse has only to snap her fingers in his ear—Boo!—and Cattalabutte jumps. It's his own cowardice, not her cruelty, that finally makes him look ridiculous, and Carabosse is so shrewd a judge of character that she instantly perceives how easily Cattalabutte can be humiliated. Her rats take an imbecilic delight in this little scene. The score tells us, "*Les pages rient d'un air caustique*."

Traditionally, Carabosse is some-

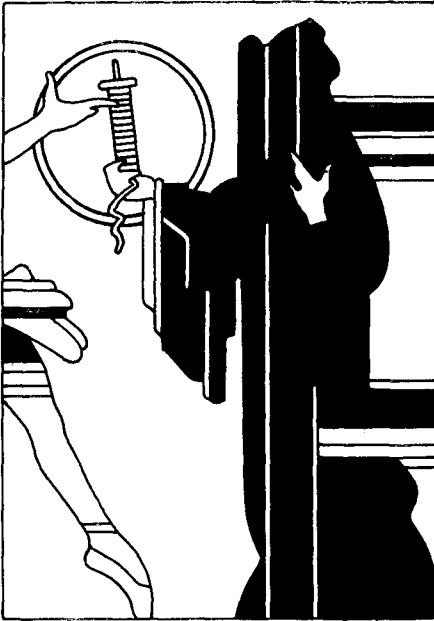
thing of a witch: she comes wearing a long black gown, her mime gestures exaggerate the length of her fingers, and she rubs her hands together the way witches do when they're concocting their brews. But Monica Mason, who now performs the role at the Royal, conceives the character on her own brilliant terms. Though there's no doubting her mean streak, Mason's Carabosse is beautiful where others are ugly, evil to the core (the role is sometimes played by a man, in travesty). It seems clear enough in her portrayal that Carabosse was once a nice fairy—a little touchy, perhaps, and jealous—whose feelings have been hurt. She isn't wicked, she's vindictive. While all the other fairies have come wearing their Sunday-best tutus, in jewel-like colors, with filigreed bodices, Carabosse intends her funereal attire as an affront: worse than wearing black to a wedding is wearing black to a christening.

The King and Queen beg Carabosse's pardon—there is alarm in the brass—and the other fairies, surrounding her in a deep *révérence*, recommend forgiveness. But Carabosse will have none of it: she laughs back at them; she mocks the Fairy of the Crystal Fountain to her face, mimicking the arm movements from her variation. She sneers at the Songbird Fairy: And you, you with your fluttery little hands . . . Carabosse will not be turned away from her purpose. She has come to deliver a curse.

She points to the crib. The baby Princess will grow up to be beautiful, Carabosse says. The crowd hangs on her every gesture. She milks the suspense and pauses, kicking the rats at her feet. Continuing, she points again to the crib, holds up a spindle, and, with long, graceful hand motions, spins an imaginary thread. The music runs along, fortissimo, until suddenly, gleefully, she pricks her finger: "She will fall asleep and her sleep will be eternal," the score says here, and the music fades to pianissimo. But Carabosse doesn't break the news so gently: she raises her arms overhead and, with one emphatic gesture, brings them crashing down in a death sentence—wrists crossed, her hands in fists. The court recoils in horror; the King and Queen, on their knees now, implore Carabosse to rescind the curse. She stands like a washerwoman, her hands on her hips, and laughs. She spreads her arms in front of her and

makes waves; the music scurries, staccato, and the rats at her feet scramble back and forth on their bellies. Their exultation at last screeches to a halt when the music shifts to E major and the Lilac Fairy, in hiding all this time, steps forward.

She bows to Carabosse; then: Why do you want to harm the Princess? I heard what you said—and she reiterates Carabosse's mime speech, gesture for gesture, right down to the final grim prediction of Aurora's death. But then she breaks the spell: from that same awful, intractable gesture—wrists crossed, hands in fists—she opens her hands and smoothes the air in front of her, as



much as to say, "But no," or "It doesn't matter." For—there's more—Aurora will not die but will fall asleep; the Lilac Fairy makes a pillow of her arms and rests her head on it. Aurora will sleep until a Prince comes and awakens her with a kiss. Unlike Carabosse's terse prophecy, the Lilac Fairy's is lyrical and unbroken; the contrast in their deliveries is as dramatic as if Gertrude Stein and Marcel Proust had been their speechwriters.

The music builds to a climax, reached when the Lilac Fairy predicts Aurora's awakening, and, rising from a deep *plié*, raises her arms in triumph. Carabosse crumbles before her. The coach stands ready; Carabosse, who has lost the battle but isn't about to concede the war, clambers back in and, drawn by her rats in harness, drives off in a huff. She rises to her feet, shakes her fist, points

to her forehead—Mark my words!—and vanishes in a cloud of smoke: pouf. The crowd at court watches her go, raising an arm in salute, or perhaps in send-off: Be gone! Right away, the sun comes out and, as the people and fairies resume their processional and assemble for the prologue's final tableau around the cradle, the blue haze that is Carabosse's wake has lifted and hovers overhead.

FROM THEN ON, the ballet unfolds exactly as predicted: the first act, a birthday party for the sixteen-year-old Princess Aurora, during which she pricks her finger on a spindle and falls into a dead faint, is according to Carabosse; the second, in which Prince Florimund awakens Aurora with a kiss, is according to the Lilac Fairy.

During Act I, it's the members of the audience who keep Carabosse's curse in mind, watching with trepidation. The members of the court seem to have forgotten it—sixteen years have passed, after all. Not even the King seems concerned. There is an awkward scene at the act's opening, when the King decrees that three women found knitting be hanged (the connection seems far-fetched—presumably knitting needles, or maybe all sharp objects, have been banned since Carabosse's prophecy). But the King's moment of recognition doesn't come until much later, when he sees an old hag, whose face is hidden by the hood of her cloak, present Aurora with a golden spindle. He puzzles for a moment—it's as if he has seen this before—and then recalls: this is the way Carabosse predicted that the Princess would come to her death. He tries to get the spindle away from her, growing impatient as she refuses to hand it over: Give it here, he pleads. But, of course, the machinery is already in motion. Aurora pricks her finger, embarks on a "*Danse-vertige*," as it's labeled in the score, and swoons, in *arabesque*. "*Aurora tombe morte*": the score's stage direction assumes the worst.

But the audience's first clue that Carabosse's hex is about to take effect comes much earlier than the King's. With the music for Aurora's entrance—frisky, shadowed with faintly minor harmonies—the Princess seems already under Carabosse's sway. Our first glimpse of Aurora, poised in the colonnade upstage before she runs into the midst of her party, confirms our fears: she is, as Carabosse foretold,

beautiful. That sense of dread grows keener during the Rose Adagio, in which we see the fruits of the other fairies' blessings: this Princess is ingenuous, graceful, good-hearted, spirited, loving, undeserving of what's about to happen to her.

But no sooner has Carabosse carried out her threat than the Lilac Fairy returns to keep her promise. She organizes a cortège to transport the Princess to her bed, then dances a lullaby to put the rest of the court to sleep. She coaxes the palace's landscaped garden to grow into a wild forest, so that the people's sleep will go undisturbed, their presence undiscovered, for a hundred years.

When, a few minutes later, the curtain rises on Act II, we find ourselves in the eighteenth century: the clothes are different in style and in their deeper, more saturated colors. Prince Florimund's hunting party is picnicking in the woods, engaging in a round of social dances—a Colin-Maillard, minuet, gavotte, farandole, mazurka. The Prince, though, is distracted, not in the mood for dancing, and he stays behind when the party continues on. The Lilac Fairy shows him a vision of the Princess Aurora and then, at his request, takes him to the palace in her mother-of-pearl boat, which looks as fragile and seaworthy as a Fabergé egg. This is the Panorama (No. 17), and in the music we can hear the waves lapping against the side of the boat.

The Awakening in itself is brief, but before it can take place, the Lilac Fairy must drive out Carabosse, who has made one last, desperate but feeble attempt to hold the fort and see that the Princess sleeps on forever. Without much of a struggle, Carabosse surrenders and then skulks off into the overgrown woods. The Prince's kiss resurrects Aurora and, stretching and yawning, the rest of the court comes back to life.

Act III, in which Aurora and Florimund are married, is another state occasion for character-dance diversissements and more variations. Invitations have gone out to representatives of other Perrault fairy tales: Beauty and the Beast, Red Ridinghood and a lusty Wolf attend. A Bluebird arrives with a Princess in tow: she is charmed by his song and follows him; he flies around her. Three other guests, Florestan and his sisters, dance a *pas de trois*.

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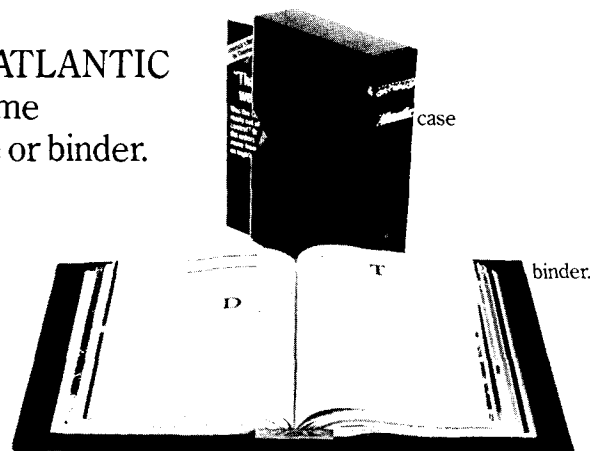
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The bride and groom take their vows in a *pas de deux*, and the ceremonies conclude with a mazurka. The only fairy in attendance is the Lilac Fairy, and the others are sadly conspicuous in their absence. But, despite his nearly fatal oversight in the prologue, Cattalabutte's services have been retained, and he patrols the stage, puff-chested, with new and deepened pride.

Like most ballets, *The Sleeping Beauty* is only as good as its cast, and in the five performances I saw, no single cast seemed quite complete. Only two Lilac Fairies—Pippa Wylde and Bryony Brind—had authority enough to command the stage, and the Royal lacks a great Aurora. Lesley Collier makes a pugnacious Princess; Jennifer Penney, who looks the part, seems slightly bored by life at court. Merle Park in the role is intelligent above all, which is not unappealing but not especially appropriate, either—it's not the Princess's mind we are out to admire.

But even without a true ballerina in the title role, and without strong dancers in the leads, the Royal Ballet understands *The Sleeping Beauty* and never for a moment betrays the ballet's spirit. The dancing is distinctly British: slightly chauvinistic, always proper; the girls see that they don't spread their legs too far in turned-out positions, or open their hips too much in *arabesque*. No step is ever made too large or too fast—nothing urgent. The girls' insteps are ravishing, delicately curved to the point. Their arms make cameo-frames for their faces. Positions are always correct, decorum prevails—as befits royalty.

The marriage of this particular company to this ballet was made in heaven, and each has served the other well over the years. When, in 1939, Nicholas Sergeyev restaged Petipa's version (or so he claimed; we'll never know how accurately he had preserved the original in his notebooks) for the company that later became the Royal Ballet, he set English dancing on its feet. *Beauty*, in one production or another, has been the repertory's staple ever since, the bread and butter by which the company survived hard times. The ballet's style has become the code by which the Royal conducts all its dancing. Now the hard times are over, but the Royal Ballet, in its fiftieth anniversary season, dances with *Beauty* in its soul. □

BOOKS

HAPPINESS IS NO LAUGHING MATTER

BY ALFRED KAZIN

CLIFFORD ODETS: AMERICAN PLAYWRIGHT
by Margaret Brenman-Gibson. Atheneum, \$30.00.



ON A WINTER NIGHT in the depths of the Depression, February 19, 1935, a mediocre actor in the "socially conscious" Group Theatre Acting Company, Clifford Odets, startlingly emerged as an important American dramatist, with a rambunctious play about poor Jews in the Bronx—*Awake and Sing!* The title came from another work addressed to poor Jews: Isaiah 26:19—*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust.*

Later that winter, having graduated from college just in time to join thirteen and a half million other Americans on the unemployment rolls, I saw Odets's play from a fifty-cent seat in the second balcony of the Belasco Theater, on West 44th Street in New York. Like most of the people in the balcony, I didn't see *Awake and Sing!* so much as I lived it. It was the first American play that convinced me that the Depression was good for writers, the first that brought dignity and fire to the tumultuous lives of New York's millions of Jews, the first that took off from the newly learned traditions of Chekhov and Russian stage practice to show difficult people *not* relating to each other in the same narrow room. Above all, it was the first to sound out joyfully, with blazing vitality, a profane, mocking English put together out of New York's street life; echoes of Hebrew, Russian, and Yiddish; the everlasting promises of American advertising; and romantic Tin Pan Alley lyrics of the period:

"All I want's a chance to get to first base!"

"That's how it is—life is like that—a cakewalk."

"What's it get you?"

"A four-car funeral."

At twenty-eight, Odets had made an initial smash with the agitprop one-act play *Waiting for Lefty*, which was

based on the violent New York taxicab strike of 1934. The success of this irresistible propaganda play suddenly gave new meaning and purpose to the actors and directors who shortly became "the Group," a company of twenty-eight young stage aspirants in revolt against the slickness of Broadway and the unfairness of the "star" system. The members of the Group made it clear that though they meant to succeed on Broadway and hoped to convert it, they would never be spiritually of Broadway. The Group was a seminar as much as it was an acting company: an intellectual kibbutz, endlessly drawn to discussions of anything relating to "the theater and society" but especially to the Stanislavsky method, which the founders—Cheryl Crawford, Harold Clurman, and Lee Strasberg—had been smitten with in a brief visit to the Soviet Union. When Harold Clurman, the only genuine intellectual in the company, directed a new play, more hours were often spent discussing the play than rehearsing it.

Out of the Group eventually came future Hollywood stars and solid performers—Franchot Tone, John Garfield, Lee J. Cobb, Karl Malden, Elia Kazan (who became more famous as a director), Howard da Silva, and Luther and Stella Adler, children of the famous Yiddish actor Jacob P. Adler. As the Group slowly fell apart during the thirties with the erosion of radical hopes and with Odets's failure to sustain the promise of *Awake and Sing!*, Odets and other members became Hollywood fixtures. Certain Group stalwarts—Stella Adler and Morris Carnovsky—seemed to producers too Jewish for leading parts. At a time when the former immigrant Louis B. Mayer, the boss of MGM, invited the German Nazi consul in Los Angeles to pass on a "political" film, it did the vital Stella Adler no good to have her nose shortened. But Julie Garfinkle, who was

Alfred Kazin is at work on *An American Procession*, a book about American writers from Emerson to Eliot.

brought up in my old Brooklyn neighborhood, became, as John Garfield, exactly the urban macho type that moviegoers of the forties and fifties most wanted in an American movie star.

The Group was not *all* Jewish, but this was sometimes hard to tell. "Gadge" (for "Gadget") Kazan, born in Turkey of Greek parentage, fit in with the Group's ethnic flavor as easily as Clurman and Strasberg, who were sons of East European Jews, and probably the most tireless theoreticians of theater since Gordon Craig. Clurman was famously "soft," Strasberg "hard," but each in his way never gave up his messianic, fanatical hopes for transforming something, somebody. Strasberg eventually became famous for forming—or was it re-forming?—Marilyn Monroe, under the rigid psychological regime of "the Method," as it was propounded at the Actors Studio. Never a modest man, he was feared for his harshness in rehearsal and his lack of tact, and for not respecting the Odets plays that put the Group across. But in the beginning, Strasberg, more than anyone else, gave the Group its "theater-religion"—and a temporary uniformity of outlook that reflected his own sometimes inspiring toughness. Strasberg's character has had fateful consequences for the easily influenced types who become our actors and actresses.

In one of her memoirs, Lillian Hellman let it be known that a distinguished WASP actress once withdrew from a play Clurman was directing (long after the thirties) because she thought Clurman's style "not toilet trained." The predominant Jews in the Group were distinctly not ladies and gentlemen. Despite what Harriet Beecher Stowe thought, oppression does not ennoble the character. But being Jews with a great respect for family—especially if they had suffered from theirs—they were genuine creatures of conflict, as well as old hands at impersonating emotion. As in any Jewish "family," at least the old-fashioned kind, emotions in the Group were language, were barter, were the stuff of life. I observed members of the Group in New York and Hollywood, and many of them were people who were "dramatic" night and day, who could not comb their hair or shake hands without playing a part. They were forever setting up situations that were rehearsals for plays that might never get written.

Odets the actor-playwright had at least acting in common with Shakespeare. He was "theater" in the curls of his blond pompadour and in his magnetic blue eyes, "theater" when he raved about Beethoven without knowing a thing about music, "theater" when he wrote fawning letters to girls he rejected as soon as they came around. He was vain, in many ways quite stupid, pathologically insecure. Apart from his flashing talent, he was essentially an incoherent personality. What set New York audiences on fire was Odets's rage and even primitivism, the passion of a period—the thirties—that has had no rival since for widespread pain and sudden hope, a period that ended in war and was later muddled by McCarthy. Odets was lucky to be part of it. There was nothing creatively interesting about his career after the thirties, and he owed his brief triumph as a dramatist entirely to the fortuitous mixing of social crisis and the rage he brought to it. As he once said to a friend, "Happiness is no laughing matter."

In our day, many American Jews are trying to become middle-class, safe, and sane. It is not surprising that both the eminently conservative head of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Murray Weidenbaum, and the ex-radical theorist of the New Right, Irving Kristol, are children of immigrants and graduates of the College of the City of New York. Whether their agreeableness in public argues a genuine diminishment of Jewish contrariness, I cannot say. But I do know that it is not always culturally useful for Jews to be spokesmen for power and the status quo. Jewish writers, thinkers, and certainly theater people owe much of their influence to a sense of their own vitality that is not always in accord with convention. As the sociologist John Cuddihy brilliantly put it, they find civility an ordeal.

CLIFFORD ODETS WAS beyond anything else a man of the theater, and the theater is itself a primitive, ritualistic institution that thrives on underground emotions. As the psychiatrist Dr. Margaret Brenman-Gibson shows in the first volume of her altogether sympathetic and fascinating biography, Odets flourished as a playwright under the pressure of social despair and wild radical hopes. By 1939, when the "fervent years," as Harold Clurman called his

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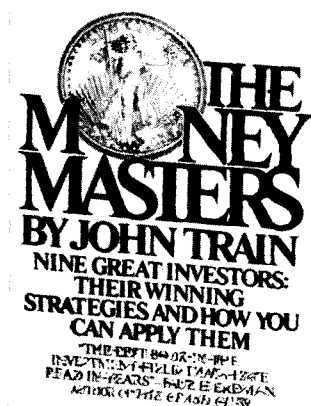
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A PENGUIN PAPERBACK

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history of the Group, ended, Odets (and this is *my* harsh judgment) had nothing to rely on but what had become a hard-talking stage patter. As a "psychological" and openly romantic playwright—in *Rocket to the Moon*, *Night Music*, *Clash by Night*, and *The Country Girl*—he emphasized a toughness in the form of melodrama and profane talk. The one big "social" drama he tried to write in the tradition of his early work, *The Silent Partner*, he could never complete to his satisfaction or Clurman's. Contrary to the belief—which, of course, Odets shared—that he cut a great career short by going out to Hollywood as early as 1936, that he somehow "betrayed" himself and his social ideals, it is clear from plays of the mid-thirties, such as *Rocket to the Moon* and *Golden Boy*, that after the creative shock of the Depression, his theatrical instincts were exposed as routine. Just as the Group actors in Hollywood were no more gifted than anyone else, just more ethnic, so Odets had no more ideas than anyone else—just a famous verbal "style" that he now pasted on to the usual Hollywood products.

Awake and Sing! came out of a moment in American life that was given Odets like a gift. He had the sense to apply all his own tumultuous memories of Jewish family life. Even this play is muddled at the end. Young Ralphie Berger takes over as if he were the Bolsheviks marching on the Winter Palace. His sister Hennie abandons her baby and *schlemiel* husband (who is not the father of the baby) to go off to the South Seas, or wherever, with the crippled war veteran Moe Axelrod, as if this, too, were a show of revolution. Odets always pictured personal exultation as a sign of "revolution." Admittedly, the American theater at its strongest—as in late Eugene O'Neill and early Tennessee Williams—is curiously subjective, even autobiographical. O'Neill, at least, was able to sustain an enduring theatrical subject out of his family crisis and personal hurt.

Odets certainly had a lot of hurt to write about. When old Jacob, the radical grandfather in *Awake and Sing!* cries out, "Marx said it—abolish such families." it is not Marx but Clifford Odets who is looking toward that millennium. According to Dr. Brenman-Gibson, Odets was always under the thumb of a monstrously powerful and domineering father. Racked with help-

less pity for his frightened mother (who bore him when she was seventeen, several times came near suicide, and was glad to die in her forties), the playwright incorporated, from time to time, shreds of his father's terrible ego. Despite his theatricality, he could not long sustain the impersonation. Attempting to explain why he was never a very good actor, he said he was never "relaxed" enough. Reading this book, I learned why.

His son kept putting L. J. Odets (born Louis Gorodetsky, in Russia) into various fiercely aggressive characters, but never as the oversize despot he actually was. Odets did not have the stamina to reproduce his father entire, and anyway, the audience would not have believed it. But the father is so much more interesting a character than his perennial-victim son that he quite runs away with Dr. Brenman-Gibson's book. "L. J." tried to convince people that he had been born here and that he had been born Odets, and he forbade Yiddish in the house. He thought it a "disgrace" for his wife to die of t.b. (a common disease early in the century) and got the doctor to report another disease on the death certificate. A failed printer in Philadelphia and a failed businessman in New York, he got enormous sums out of his son the screenwriter, and never stopped "advising" him how to handle his career and his failing marriage with the actress Luise Rainer. Clifford constantly sent his father money but for years would not speak to him. After Clifford's agonizing death from cancer of the stomach in 1963, L. J. was less grieved than he was concerned with taking credit for his son's "genius." He was a total four-flusher who seems never to have had a moment's doubt about himself in any capacity whatever; nearly eighty, he was propositioning Dr. Brenman-Gibson when she interviewed him many years ago for this book.

His son, alas, was not only less interesting but more obvious. As a case, he does not deserve all the interest that our psychiatrist-author lavishes on him. The "psychoanalytic" explanations for Odets's creativity seem to me as fruitless as such discussions usually are. But the narrative and documentation are thoroughly absorbing, because of Dr. Brenman-Gibson's passionate personal interest in the man and the period. I know of no other biography

that makes it so clear why the thirties enlivened and even electrified so many people then, why they terrify so many people now. For the thirties, if very briefly, really challenged the old high-and-mighty capitalism, which is why so many ex-radicals and ex-New Dealers in Washington are now trying to "repeal" them.

The thirties may have been full of delusion, but the delusion was inevitable, given the depths of American breakdown at the time. The period was also generous, stormy, creative for a time, and above all a great *event*. It ended in war, not revolution. By the time war had done its work, it was barely possible for some people to remember how passionate the thirties had been, how necessary their hopes were, and how contagious. "Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive, but to be young was very heaven!" One great thing about the thirties was that it gave a subject to writers who felt little in themselves. And they knew it was a great subject. Only as creatures of history, dreaming of "mastering" it some day, did they have their big moment.

CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

BY IRVIN EHRENPREIS

RUMOR VERIFIED: POEMS 1979-1980
by Robert Penn Warren. Random
House, \$9.95 cloth, \$5.95 paper.



STAYING POWER IS rarely a feature of Sgenius. American poets, especially, tend to fade when they age. But Robert Penn Warren, as his new book testifies, has gained strength with years.

Even the casual turner of pages will be struck by Warren's descriptions of landscape and the effects of light. He has the art of bestowing special significance on things seen, heard, or touched, without falsifying the simple act of perception. In his work, it is rare for a country scene, however minutely observed, to lack symbolic implications.

A favorite motif is dawn. The poet,

Irvin Ehrenpreis is Linden Kent Memorial Professor of English at the University of Virginia.

wakeful and uneasy during the night,
watches the dawn "seep in"—

sluggish and gray
As tidewater fingering timbers in a
long-abandoned hulk.

The wateriness of the first trace of
light blends with the poet's submer-
gence in fluid half-sleep. "Hulk" sug-
gests the poet's body, cut off from day-
time perceptions. The whole poem
comes to a focus in the concept of self-
definition, because morning brings a
sense of reality to the insubstantial
sleeper:

Are you
Real when asleep? Or only when,

Feet walking, lips talking, or
Your member making its penetra-
tion, you
Enact, in a well-designed set, that
ectoplasmic
Drama of laughter and tears, the
climax of which always

Strikes with surprise

The subtle movement from descrip-
tion to reflection is typical of the poet,
but so is the theme of selfhood. Warren
has said, in an interview, that a poem is
"a way of knowing what kind of a per-
son you can be, getting your reality
shaped a little bit better."

Like most memorable poems com-
posed by Americans, those by Warren
keep returning us to the nature of per-
sonality—the relation between charac-
ter and memory—or between immedi-
ate experience and analytical con-
sciousness. In short lyrics, no more
than two or three pages long, Warren
powerfully confronts the gap between
feeling and thought. Again and again
the poet yields pleasurably to a moment
of strong perceptions or deep emotion.
But then he draws back and ponders it,
unwilling to let the self dissolve in sen-
sation. Literature, Warren said to an-
other interviewer, starts from "the at-
tempt to inspect one's own soul."

Certain images persist in Warren's
work. In a new poem, "Minneapolis Sto-
ry," a gold maple leaf drops from its
bough, signifying the autumnal passage
from experience to reflection; and in
another new poem; "Millpond Lost," a
leaf "golden, luxurious," falls on a mill-
pond. As it touches the water, the poet
stops imagining his own return to a
scene from boyhood and confesses that

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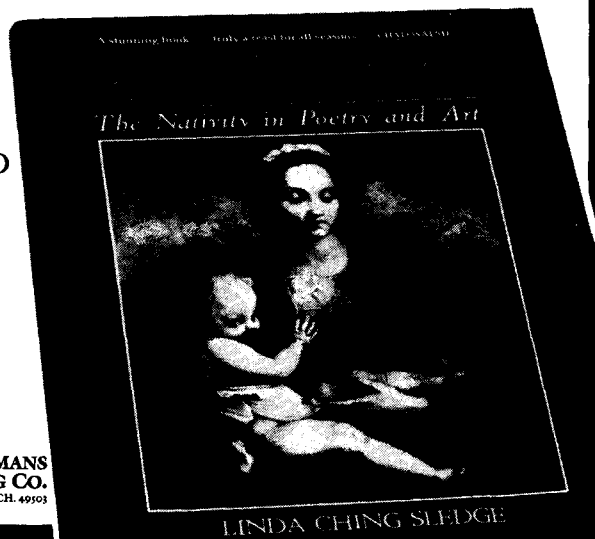
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Across. 1. CR(E)ATE 6. METE(O)R 11. MIC(ROB)E 12. N(I)O-BE 14. SH(AMP)OO (*map*
anag.) 15. DE(A)R (rev.) 16. SO-A-R 18. MADE-MO(I)SELLE 19. SAV(e)-ANNA 22.
MAOR-I (rev.) 23. PIQUE (double def.) 25. TALKIES (anag.) 28. VAINGLORIOUS
(anag.) 31. NAM-E (rev.) 33. TOP-E 34.(t)REMORS-E 35.COAT-I 36.DR-AGO-ON 37.
GAM(IN)E 38. E-N-TREE **Down.** 1. MEDUSA (anag.) 2. CH(IM)E 3. OARS (anag.) 4.
RE-A-SON 5. THEME (hidden) 6. BEG-ON(I)-A 7. MIMOSA (anag.) 8. EONS (anag.) 9.
B(OUR-R)EE 10. RETA(IL) (rev.) 13. R(EVEN)UE 17. LO(OK-O)UT 20. PAN-ACE-A 21.
T-A-BOOED 23. VI(R)A-GO 24. GEM-IN-I 26. LIEDER (homophone) 27. SU(PIN)E 29.
LEAR-N 30. SENOR (anag.) 32. EMIT (rev.) 33. SO(O)T

he never went back. The same leaf appeared half a century ago in "The Return," where it fell slowly, "Uncertain as a casual memory," to meet its reflection rising from the depths of the water below. Even then, it was an emblem of memory trying and failing to recover the past.

Not only themes and images but also the forms of the poems connect the new work with the old. A wholly charming poem, "What Voice at Moth-Hour," in *Rumor Verified*, deals irresistibly with the poet's recollection of a childhood misdemeanor. On a spring evening in Kentucky, young Robert hid after dark among the trees and refused to come home even though he heard his anxious parents calling. The same incident was the subject of a poem published in 1957,

sponsibility. "What poetry most significantly celebrates," Warren declared in *Democracy and Poetry* (1975), "is the capacity of man to face the deep, dark inwardness of his nature and his fate."

Men long to perform a great deed because the experience itself is joyful. Once they possess fame, however, they discover how little it redeems the terrible disappointments inherent in any life. Yet the experience remains joyful. On the other hand, the exhilaration wears off, the burden of hopelessness descends, and it must be tolerated, even though one knows the burden will keep returning, for one also learns that it dissolves in the reality of love. As Warren says in a new poem, "Fear and Trembling,"



"What Was the Promise That Smiled from the Maples at Evening?" But besides reworking an old theme, the poem has a familiar form—pentameter quatrains with lines rhyming alternately. The five-beat line and regular, four-line stanzas that appear several times in *Rumor Verified* are found as early as "To a Face in a Crowd," published when the poet was twenty.

Such devices might reflect the example of John Crowe Ransom and Allen Tate. Both these men were Warren's seniors in the remarkable group known as "the Fugitives," who met in Nashville, Tennessee, during the years 1915–1928, to read and criticize their own writing.

Warren's poems deal repeatedly with the mystery of success and failure—the danger of supposing that either is unavoidable or that one cannot become the other. Growing up in a region afflicted with fatalism, he had to educate himself to moral action and re-

Only at death of ambition does the deep
Energy crack crust, spurt forth,
and leap

From grottoes, dark—and from the
caverned enchainment?

While we can trace themes, images, and forms that endure through all of Warren's long career, change is fundamental to his talent. During the decade following World War II, Warren produced hardly any short poems. But then he gave up writing short stories and altered his conception of a lyric. When he composed such verse again, it was, as he said, "more tied up with an event, an anecdote, an observation." The new poems were closer to the felt life of their author.

Meanwhile, that life was transformed. Warren's first marriage had terminated in divorce. He was married again, to Eleanor Clark (in 1952), and the couple soon had a daughter and a

son. In 1955, Warren's father died. These large changes inevitably altered the poet's view of his world. He obviously delighted in fatherhood; and he began experimenting with what might be called the poetry of happiness. It strikes one that in Warren's narrative poem based on the life of Audubon (1969), the act of violence is frustrated. Although Warren dwells, in *Audubon*, on the paradoxes of love and destructiveness, sexuality and death, he also dwells on the interconnectedness of all living things. Audubon shoots the birds he loves (in order to study them), but he also gives them new life in his art.

DURING THE PAST twelve years, Warren has opened himself up engagingly. *Rumor Verified* continues the development toward a direct use of personal experience. The title of the book refers to the axiom that no man can escape the limitations of the human condition. An opening poem suggests the relation between love and wisdom, by presenting an ideal experience of sexual passion. Another poem dramatizes the strength of the human instinct for meaningful existence. The closing poems of the book are centered on the need to accept one's character with all its deficiencies and to work through it—not against it—toward an insight that may never be completely possessed. In the body of the book, Warren ponders the mysterious relation between time (or history) and the self that rises from it and yet persists against it.

Typically, the poems move from a memory or a startling experience to a meditation, sometimes in the shape of a question. Along with large generalizations they exhibit brilliantly concrete detail. Warren once said to an interviewer that what he would hunt for in a poem is "a vital and evaluating image."

In form, the new poems are surprisingly regular. Only a third are in quite free verse. Another third are in quatrains, usually rhymed. The rest are in various other forms, mainly irregular distichs or tercets. In the skillful "Sunset Scrupulously Observed," the flight of a jet is exquisitely contrasted with that of five swifts. The poet treats the plane as a splendid living creature and the birds as machines. The poem, in free verse, is a triumph of design; the main contrast is handsomely framed by the

sun going down in the background and a flycatcher perched on a poplar in the foreground, opening and closing the poem with its presence and absence.

But the surprise of the book is "Moth-Hour," a poem in neat quatrains with expressively soft line endings, gentle, undulating rhythms, and subtle patterns of sound (particularly the use of "i" vowels). All these elements support the nostalgia of the speaker as he remembers how innocence gave way to experience when he made a boyish gesture toward separating himself from his parents: it was precisely their love that he had to resist if he was ever to grow into a deeply loving selfhood:

What voice at moth-hour did I hear
calling
As I stood in the orchard while the
white
Petals of apple blossoms were fall-
ing,
Whiter than moth-wing in that
twilight?

What voice did I hear as I stood by
the stream,
Bemused in the murmurous wis-
dom there uttered,
While ripples at stone, in their
steely gleam,
Caught last light before it was
shuttered?

What voice did I hear as I wan-
dered alone
In a premature night of cedar,
beech, oak,
Each foot set soft, then still as
stone
Standing to wait while the first owl
spoke?

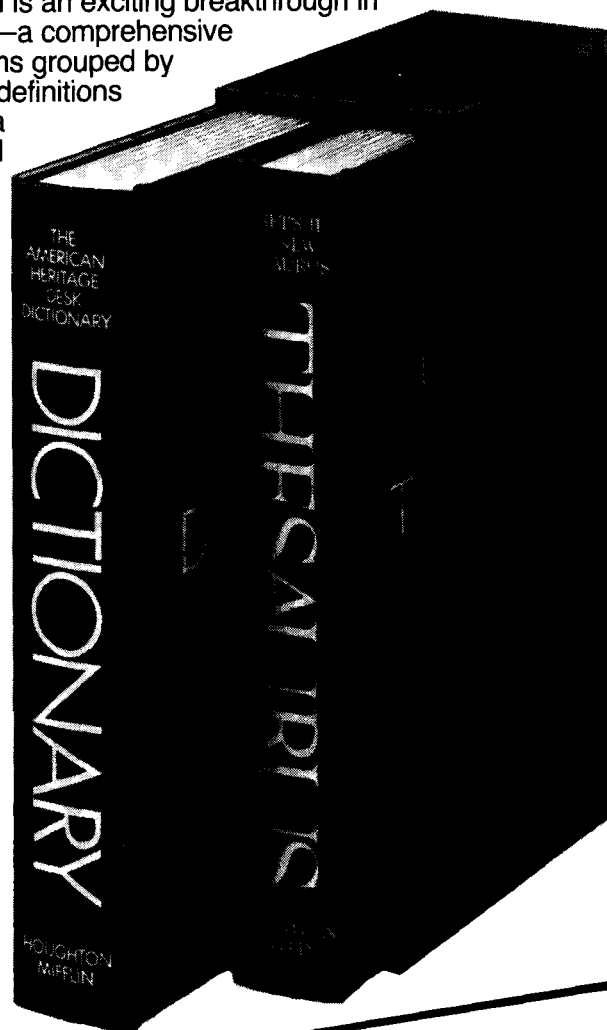
The voice that I heard once at dew-
fall, I now
Can hear by a simple trick. If I
close
My eyes, in that dusk I again
know
The feel of damp grass between
bare toes,

Can see the last zigzag, sky-skitter-
ing, high,
Of a bullbat, and even hear, far off,
from
Swamp-cover, the whip-o-will, and
as I
Once heard, hear the voice: *It's late!*
Come home.

Better to give (bestow, present) and to receive (accept, take).

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SHORT REVIEWS



THE LANGUAGE OF CLOTHES by Alison Lurie. Random House, \$20.00. Ms. Lurie maintains that clothes are a sign language, revealing the wearer's economic status, temperament, intentions, and state of mind, or, when adroitly chosen, disguising all those. She expands this essentially unsurprising notion with such intelligence and humor that it becomes an irreverent mixture of social history and social satire, and quite delightful to read. The illustrations have been chosen with a sharp eye for sartorial absurdity.

WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS: A NEW WORLD NAKED by Paul Mariani. McGraw-Hill, \$22.95. Williams spent his practical life as a doctor in his native town of Rutherford, New Jersey. His unintentionally impractical life was devoted to writing anti-classical poetry, which no standard publisher, at the time, wanted to print and few people wished to read when it was privately published. Williams, undeterred, persisted in his search for a purely American language and viewpoint, and achieved recognition at last in his middle fifties. Most of Williams's poetical career consisted of disappointments and unfulfilled promises; it is grimly typical of his affairs that a meeting with Harry Crosby never took place because Crosby had chosen to shoot himself. Mr. Mariani therefore cannot be blamed for a certain monotony in the pattern of Williams's life, and, to be fair, the pattern will not seem monotonous to readers genuinely interested in the literary experiments of the early twentieth century. The book includes a mountain of facts about Williams's contemporaries, from his old friend Pound to his indifferent enemy Eliot. It records the hopeful births and early deaths of little magazines, the aesthetic manifestos and countermanifestos, the reciprocal appreciations and denigrations—all the fuss and ferment of a lively time.

THE FIRST EMPEROR OF CHINA by Arthur Cotterell. Holt, Rinehart and Win-

ston, \$19.95 to December 31; \$25.00 thereafter. The first emperor was the man who caused his tomb to be guarded by the life-size pottery army that is now being excavated (rightly) so carefully that for inquisitive archaeology buffs the process amounts to the Chinese digging torture. Mr. Cotterell's handsomely illustrated book provides some relief for such sufferers. He describes the amazing discoveries already made and adds a brisk history of their background and of the emperor himself. Ch'in Shih-huang-ti standardized currency, law, written language, roadways, weights and measures. Unfortunately, these sensible steps were accompanied by much cruelty, book-burning, and superstition, while the construction of extravagant palaces, the Great Wall, and the imperial tomb required heavy taxation and murderous forced labor. The Ch'in dynasty lasted fewer than twenty years, falling, in 206 B.C., to what the Chinese consider their first peasant rebellion, but the basic administrative structure established by Ch'in Shih-huang-ti lasted for 2,000 years.

NISA by Marjorie Shostak. Harvard, \$20.00. Nisa belongs to the !Kung of the Kalahari Desert, a hunting and gathering people better known as Bushmen, although Ms. Shostak considers the term derogatory. Nisa's life story, as recorded in her own words by Ms. Shostak, concentrates on distinctly feminine experiences in marriages, love affairs, childbirth, family squabbles and affections. The anthropologist encouraged such concentration in the hope of suggesting the life once lived by everyone's female ancestors, since it is believed that all societies descend from hunters and gatherers. Insofar as personal relationships are concerned, Nisa reveals a world both alien and familiar. It is, however, a world composed almost entirely of emotions or actions arising from emotion. One never learns how a !Kung woman locates edible roots, does beadwork (if indeed she does make the beadwork she wears), or sets a trap for game. No doubt such information can be found in other reports, but its absence here gives Nisa, who must surely be a capable woman, a curious and rather endearing quality of perpetual, flighty adolescence.

AN INDECENT OBSESSION by Colleen McCullough. Harper & Row, \$13.50. Ms.

McCullough's novel is set in a jungle hospital where, at the tag end of World War II, a group of Australian soldiers have been stowed away for battle fatigue. They are dependent on, and in their various and sometimes regrettable ways devoted to, the nurse who manages the place. Everyone is getting along quite well until the arrival of a man who appears to be mentally normal and therefore to have no business on the premises. Violence ensues. The arrangement is a reasonable scheme for a novel, but the author has a plodding style and a habit of setting the important episodes offstage. The combination of the routine being described directly while the exciting is reported second-hand is not forbidden to a novelist (nothing is forbidden to a novelist—the form is a triumph of anarchy), but it does not work well for Ms. McCullough.

BISMARCK by Edward Crankshaw. Viking, \$19.95. His biographer begins by announcing that Bismarck had the kind of courage "which has been the mark of saints and holy martyrs as well as some of the most unpleasant men who have ever lived." He then demonstrates, with scholarship and expert writing, that Otto von Bismarck-Schönhausen, creator of Imperial Germany, was not only unpleasant but irresponsibly dangerous. It is startling to see fifty years of European history presented as the work of a monstrous con man who enjoyed trickery for its own sake, but Mr. Crankshaw makes his interpretation believable. He also makes it readable. A biographer who hates his subject is usually good company.

DEATH'S GRAY ANGEL by James Sherburne. Houghton Mifflin, \$10.95. This mystery story is really an excuse to display the author's enthusiasm for the lingo and method of bunco games, with which he both enlightens and amuses the reader. Beware of Finding the Leather.

LECTURES ON RUSSIAN LITERATURE by Vladimir Nabokov, edited by Fredson Bowers. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich/Bruccoli Clark, \$19.95.

THE BREAKS OF THE GAME by David Halberstam. Knopf, \$15.00.

Portions of these recently published books first appeared in *The Atlantic*, in somewhat different form.

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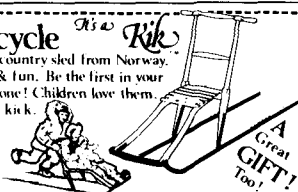
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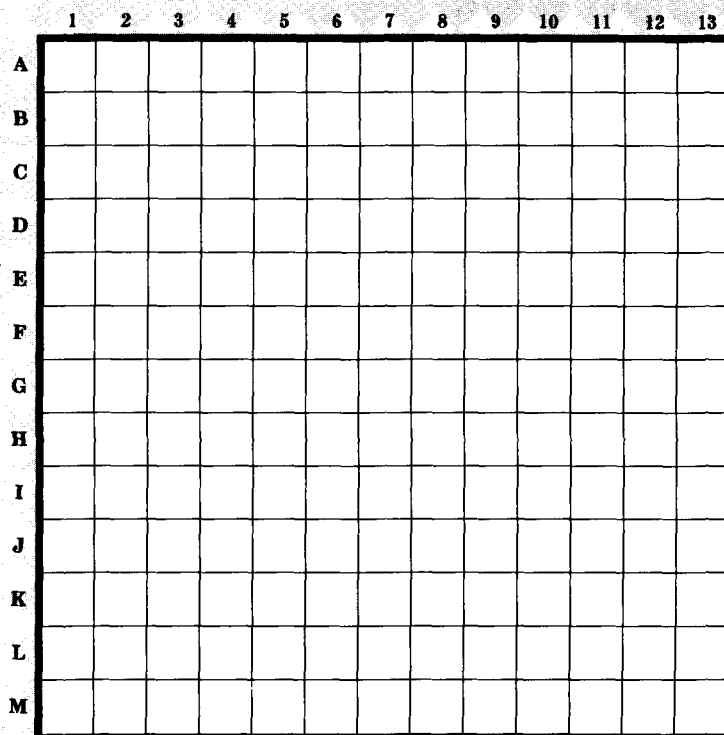
THE ATLANTIC PUZZLER

BY EMILY COX AND HENRY RATHVON

ACROSTIC

Letters of clue answers, when put in the appropriate squares, will create two separate messages. The letters in many squares (e.g. A4, H11,) are derived from two different clues. The first letters of the clue answers reveal the identity of one of these messages. Solvers are encouraged to shade in the diagram squares not occupied by letters. Answers include three proper nouns. Punctuation may be used deceptively.

The solution to last month's puzzler appears on page 89.



1. I've the potted palm (6) (A4, H3, K12, M4, C8, C13)
2. Tear straw (4) (B3, G13, K3, F3)
3. Dislike a rendering (8) (D9, M11, A7, K11, I9, A2, A13, E10)
4. Hunter has sleeping accommodations in back (6) (M6, I5, F13, C12, H12, K10)
5. Not to be trusted in a state of undress? (9) (K2, E7, G4, L7, J12, C4, B7, D4, C10)
6. Span of magazines (8) (E11, J1, B1, A6, E5, E13, K13, L6)
7. Bridge in some disorder (7) (F7, K4, L12, G2, D1, L11, G8)
8. Ron is in the position of power (6) (B4, I2, A9, M8, A12, L1)
9. Press club humor (5) (J1, A3, L3, L13, B13)
10. Sort of cold and piscine? (6) (H7, A1, M7, K12, F10, F3)
11. Material used in many longjohns (5) (B12, E12, C4, L3, J2)
12. Oregon conservative penning a speech (7) (C1, H11, K8, A4, H12, B9, L2)
13. Standard rail is glaring (8) (L7, H8, F7, A8, M3, C6, E3, I3)
14. Fraternity's demand (5) (H7, M9, M1, G11, E2)
15. Eccentric broods of young birds (10) (K9, H13, H1, H6, I7, E5, D1, E7, I12, K3)
16. Poem with English farm animals (7) (A10, G7, I5, A8, M13, L12, F12)
17. Flying geese circle out of control (7) (M11, M5, B6, A3, E13, D3, B8)
18. Number for GI they reassigned (6) (L9, B2, M2, H3, G3, I8)
19. Pity a slugger (4) (A5, F11, J12, I11)
20. "Eat and drink," I advocate (9) (C10, L4, G6, G7, C1, L5, G3, M4, H11)
21. Inch cutter (4) (M10, I6, I1, J13)
22. Extreme hostilities harbored by ex-president (7) (M7, E4, B5, I13, K8, C12, M1)
23. Again check the seat of a chair? (8) (K11, B10, C6, L8, M13, I12, K2, H2)
24. Watchful round British maid or butler (9) (E9, G12, F10, C5, C3, D13, C11, M6, I3)
25. Greek character leads small uprising (6) (F13, C2, F2, A2, A12, B13)
26. Monitors abroad will be heard (8) (A13, C8, M12, M3, L10, B11, J13, D4)
27. There's fault to be found in your saving money (7) (D5, H6, G2, B2, A1, D11, G8)
28. Increase makes film pay off (7) (D9, G10, G6, E11, G4, B1, L2)
29. Victory is within the grasp of no military group (4) (B12, C11, D13, I8)
30. Amphibian running from scientist (6) (E3, A11, K6, H1, D2, J2)
31. Way in through evergreen trees (6) (C9, L13, F2, K1, A11, B11)
32. Pasta and beans (7) (D10, K5, E4, K10, H8, D12, L10)
33. Covered with a spread, say, in bed (8) (G12, H13, B4, H2, G1, M9, E1, I6)
34. Concord folks caught in a hail (9) (I7, B8, B3, F4, D12, F12, L6, D3, D11)
35. Insistent man from Mesopotamia? (6) (G13, L8, M2, B6, F1, D5)
36. Expand the space needed for driving sled dogs? (8) (G10, L4, I9, I2, A9, M8, D2, K13)

Note: The instructions above are for this month's puzzle only. It is assumed that you know how to decipher clues. For a complete introduction to clue-solving, write to The Atlantic Reprint Department, 8 Arlington Street, Boston, Mass. 02116, enclosing a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

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